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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

ANOTHER book showing the influence of Kierkegaard. This time it is from the pen of the Rev. Charles Duell KEAN, Rector of Kirkwood, Missouri—*The Meaning of Existence*.[1] Through Kierkegaard he has found a Christian faith of a creative sort that may come to the rescue of a world in despair, as indeed such a faith did in the Early Church. But while he is in the line of Kierkegaard, strong socializing influences have also shaped his thought; he owes a great deal, as he tells us, to the writings of Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr.

In the first part of the book Dr. KEAN treats of the need of the modern world. Here is how he begins: 'The world is coming out of a convulsion. For more than thirty years it has been in the throes of a disorder so violent that every aspect of its life has been strained to the utmost. In the course of its malady it has turned on itself and destroyed individuals, families, and nations. It has wrenched and twisted its political organizations, tortured out of shape its economic systems, and it has challenged the relevance of church and school.'

This is a fair sample of the author's style; and it is not long before he offers his readers the general plan of his thought. There are three levels, he says, on which man lives—history, the intellect, and existence. On each of those levels the author holds reconstruction to be needful. He analyses each in the second part of the book, which treats of the meaning of experience.

The influence of Kierkegaard appears in the account of existence, which here bears a meaning so particular that the phrase is capitalized as Existence. And what is Existence? It is the area, we are told, where historical circumstances and intellectual patterns are in tension with each other; it is that aspect of human experience in which answers are demanded to life's ultimate problems so as to make immediate experience meaningful. These answers, it is added, form man's religion; and, consequently, reconstruction on the level of Existence must be in terms of religion.

The phrase, Religion, thus capitalized, is also here used in a particular sense; for the fundamental meaning of Religion is said to be found only on the level of Existence, and it is with fundamental meaning that the author is concerned. Religion, fundamentally viewed, is that aspect of the level of Existence by which man interprets to himself the meaning of his own experience. To a large extent, says the author (and here he takes a characteristic position), Existence can only be interpreted in terms of 'myth.' It follows that Religion makes much use of 'mythology,' whether or not the adherents of an historical religion realize it.

'The word "myth" suggests to many minds that the central narrative is untrue or inaccurate. As a matter of fact, it may be true, or it may not, but that is not the issue. When the words "myth" or "mythology" are used, they always refer to a description of Existence, the importance of which is its revelation of the meaning of experience rather than the truth or untruth of the details of its story.'

It is in the light of the foregoing plan of thought that the author considers, in the third and final part of his work, the Christian basis for reconstruction. He believes in Christianity and the world's need of it; he believes also (and here many Christian thinkers would part from him) that it is through the use of 'myth' that Christianity gives a supreme interpretation of the meaning of experience. He regards 'myth' as related to history, but in his exposition of the Christian 'mythology' he seems to lay little or no stress on the relationship. At any rate much that St. Paul viewed as historical is not so viewed in this re-reading of the Christian story.

This should appear from the following, which is excerpted from the chapters on the Meaning and Content of the Christian Gospel: The myth of the Cross declares that the crucifixion of Jesus, historically the execution of a wandering Galilean teacher, was a matter of universal significance for all men; it is the revelation of the way the contact between God and man works. The Cross is

[1] Latimer House, London; 12s. 6d. net.

meaningless unless it is considered on the basis of identification with it, unless man discovers himself to be both crucifier and crucified. The Resurrection myth declares that the crucified Jesus continues to be a living, positive personality with whom the most fruitful personal relationships can be maintained. Literalization of such aspects of the Resurrection as the empty tomb misses the point. The meaning of the Resurrection myth is that man can know his own personality now through 'I-thou' relationships with the living personality of Jesus.

The Fall, by its mythological reference to prehistory, dramatizes the fact that man can discover no time in his life when he is not a sinner. The Original Sin myth recognizes that sinfulness is shared by all men, a fact that in no way softens the recognition of it for the man confronted by Christ.

The Ascension means that Christ, who is primarily known in terms of Existence, is identified with man's ideal so as to become the basis for his thinking and the source of his ethical reflection; the ascended Christ is in judgment on history. While the Ascension myth takes the level of the intellect seriously, the Pentecostal myth takes history with equal seriousness. It is an assertion that the relationship to the crucified and risen Christ can be the basis for all historical relationships, in the sense of making faith an influential factor in historical situations.

Dr. KEAN goes on to treat of the 'myths' of the Kingdom and the Church in pursuance of his endeavour to interpret Christianity as a 'creative mythology,' as a basis for reconstruction in the modern world. But however much we may sympathize with his endeavour to express the spiritual realities behind the Christian story, we must say his expression of them is in terms so vague and difficult to understand that it is hard to imagine a preacher armed with such a transcript of the Christian religion effectively influencing his hearers.

Who was it that crucified Jesus? In the Middle Ages it was always said that it was the Jews, and that was perhaps the chief reason why the Jews were so cruelly persecuted. They were only getting, it was said, what they deserved.

Jews to-day, very naturally, resent the accusation, and are quite ready to refute what they regard as a gross calumny. Two recent books by Jewish writers attempt to put the responsibility for the crucifixion upon the Romans. Mr. Chaim Newman, the editor of a symposium entitled *Gentile and Jew* (Alliance Press, 12s. 6d.), bids us 'read history objectively,' and recognize that 'the Romans were hard rulers,' that 'the cross was a *Roman* institution,' that 'to Pilate the Roman governor, Jesus was a rebel . . . he had but one answer. It was death on the cross.'

According to Dr. Solomon GRAYZEL, whose *A History of the Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America; $3.50) is noticed in this number, the crucifixion was the result of a tragedy of errors. The Jewish authorities, fearing trouble if 'Joshua,' after the cleansing of the Temple, were not discredited, wanted to find some charge 'by means of which they could hold him imprisoned until after the holiday.' But Jesus, under examination, forced their hands by asserting that He was the Messiah. 'Whatever moved Joshua to say what He did, no one knows.' Perhaps the high priest and his friends should have kept Him in prison. 'Instead, they chose to deal with Him harshly.' They sent Him to Pilate, and Pilate being what he was, the cross was inevitable.

All this is hardly to 'read history objectively.' It does not even explain the crucifixion in the immediate historical situation. As Dr. Vincent Taylor has convincingly shown, for Jesus Himself His acceptance of the cross was the acceptance of a destiny, irrevocable, ordained for Him by God. It had to be. This does not mean that Judas the betrayer, for example, is to be excused for his part in it, as though someone had to betray his Master, and it was Judas who drew the unlucky number. What he did he did deliberately, and Jesus said of him that it would have been better for him if he had never been born. Even Judas himself, as the sequel shows, knew better than his well-meaning modern apologists. We can only explain Jesus' own attitude to His death by relating the cross to the universal tragedy of human sin. Whether or not we believe in 'original sin,' and whatever we may mean by it if we do, it was sin, that *massa perditionis*, that brought Jesus to the cross.

For it was to the most moral and religious nation the world has ever known that Jesus came. And the most moral and religious among them urged the rest on to have Him crucified. This is not to revive the old cry that the Jews crucified Jesus. Pilate was any colonial governor; the priests and scribes were the Bishops and Free-Church leaders of their time; the crowd was any crowd at a cup-final. None of us can have any

confidence that if he had been there he would have acted differently from those who were. The cross concludes all mankind, and all individual men, under sin. That is why Johann Heermann wrote :

Who was the guilty ? Who brought this upon Thee ?
Alas, my treason, Jesu, hath undone Thee ;
'Twas I, Lord Jesu, I it was denied Thee :
I crucified Thee.

This is no morbid make-believe. We can only say that Christ died for all, and we can only receive His salvation, as we recognize that our sins are of the same kind as those that brought Him to the cross, and that if we had been there we should have had a hand in it.

The truth is that contemporary Jewish writers—Buber's essay on 'The Two Centres of the Jewish Soul,' in *Mamre : Essays in Religion* (Melbourne and Oxford University Presses, 12s. 6d.), is a conspicuous example—are much too sanguine about the capacity of unredeemed human nature for close fellowship with God. It is all very simple : there is of course no Incarnation ; nor is there any need of a Mediator ; there was never any 'Fall' ; and the doctrine of original sin is a libel on decent human nature. But if we say that the Fall, any story of a Fall, is a 'myth,' in the vulgar meaning of the word myth, as a story of something that never really happened ; and if we say that the doctrine of original sin is a libel on human nature ; and if we go on to account for Jesus as just a good man, the best man, of course, who ever lived ; then our fundamental presuppositions are more Jewish than Christian. Most people's outside the Churches are, and likewise those of many inside the Churches as well.

The cry 'When wilt Thou save the people ?' in the sense that the early Christian socialists meant it, has been answered in this generation. But we are not saved. The human heart is the same under socialism or communism as it was under *laissez faire* capitalism. Man first sinned, so the old myth had it, because he was attracted by the prospect of being 'like God' ? To blame the cross upon anybody but ourselves, and to assert that we have no need of a Mediator, is pure egotism, egotism of the kind that makes the cross a stumbling block.

The Modern Re-Statement.

II.

By the Right Reverend J. W. Hunkin, D.D., Bishop of Truro.

The actual living Church is all the better for criticism, but it should be informed criticism, sincerely appreciative of the Church as a great redemptive agency. It is true that Professor Huxley got the better of Bishop Wilberforce in their famous argument about Evolution, but the Professor himself once said that in his earlier experience of sickness and suffering as a young doctor he had found that 'the most effective helpers of the higher humanity were not the scientist or the philosopher, but the parson and the sister and the Bible woman.' [1]

The sufferings of mankind are to a very considerable extent due to human ignorance and folly and selfishness. In this ignorance and folly and selfishness we are all involved. Ignorance and folly and selfishness have landed me in thought and word and deed for which I am very sorry. I acknowledge my guilt and earnestly desire to be forgiven. Ultimately my offence is against God, for it is His creation that has received harm from me. That harm must be repaired if God's good purpose for His universe is not to be frustrated. Only to a very limited extent can I myself repair the harm that I have done.

Using language which is appropriate as between persons—and that is the least misleading language available to me—I am impelled to say that in forgiving me God takes upon Himself to pay the charges of my fault. And that is the message and the meaning of the Cross of Christ.

The Good News of the gospel is that God's forgiveness is free, and the individual appropriates and enjoys it simply by faith. Faith in God, personal trust in God, moves the mountain of guilt. 'All things are possible to him that believeth' (Mk 9^{23}). Jesus heaped paradox upon paradox to emphasize the power of Faith. Here little re-statement is needed. Attend, O modern man, just *attend* to the Psychotherapy of Faith. Your undoing is very largely the result of your

[1] *Life*, i. 351.

phobias and repressions, your mental, moral, and spiritual complexes and inhibitions. Faith can break these bonds. Here and now, in a moment—and you can walk out free.

Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.—(Ps 51^{7}.)

Newness of life is the promise held out to us by the gospel: life, fresh, welling up, breaking loose, abounding. Every day is a new day: you start it as a new man. 'Old things are passed away: all things have become new.' New, new, ever new.

The key prayer of the Christian, then, is 'Lord, increase our faith.' Faith is, of course, by no means mere intellectual belief. It is thoroughgoing, self-committing, trust. 'By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God' (Eph 2^{8}). It is for us to be receptive. Through the lifting up of the heart in thankfulness, through the out-stretching of the soul in aspiration, through the deep yearning of the human spirit after communion with the Divine Spirit we tune in to receive what the manifold grace of God has to bestow.

But here again man soon finds that he is a gregarious and not a solitary creature. Fellowship is essential for the true development of the spiritual life, and that is what the Church provides: fellowship of the Spirit. It is a fellowship in which order is compatible with freedom. 'The compatability of freedom and authority, of science and revelation, is surely a most essential and fundamental Catholic principle. Its application is the perennial problem. The Church which solves it first will sweep the world into its net. So far, without attempting a logical synthesis, the Church of England has always preached, ultimately, respect for tradition and respect for conscience (moral and intellectual), and it is perhaps she who seems most likely to win the race.' So wrote the Roman Catholic, George Tyrrell,[1] before he was excommunicated.

Others may have a different opinion as to the probable winner of the race. But the race is an honourable one, and all the competitors deserve to be wished good luck in the name of the Lord. They must all lay aside the weight of ignorance and credulity and superstition.

The traditional formulæ and creeds form a valuable link with the past, but in certain respects they have become something of a handicap. It would be from many points of view a great advantage if they could by common consent be revised. As this is at present impracticable, they must be used with discretion. Not only reasonable liberty of interpretation but also reasonable liberty of disagreement must be freely conceded.

The one primary belief of all the beliefs of the Christian religion is belief in God: God not less than personal; a free agent, not erratic, no pedant, no crank. No secondary religious belief can be admitted which involves a conception derogatory to the Divine Nature.

God is not a God of disorder, but what His order is we know but in part and to an approximation. An alleged event which seems to be contrary to what we call one of the Laws of Nature may, on further investigation, prove to be due to the resultant effect of another undiscovered Law of Nature acting with the Law we know. A hundred years ago if a man had said that he had seen a heavy mass of metal travelling high up in the air over the middle of the Atlantic his sceptical friends would have said that he must have been dreaming, for such a thing would be contrary to the Law of Gravitation. Now we know that while the Law of Gravitation still operates so do other Dynamical Laws the effect of which was not understood (and certainly not controlled) a hundred years ago.

If by the word 'miracle' you mean an event contrary to the Laws of Nature, then of any strange event you can never positively assert that it was a miracle, because you can never know that it may not be explicable under a Law of Nature not yet discovered.

The late Professor A. E. Taylor defined a miracle as an event in which the character of a Divine purpose underlying the whole course of events becomes exceptionally transparent. The rise of the Christian Church after the crucifixion of Jesus is such an event, as Dr. Barnes has admitted in his recent book. That is surely the proper sense of the word miracle. As popularly used, and especially by people who have only a smattering of Natural Science and no philosophy, the term is ambiguous and often misleading.

Whether any event actually happened as alleged we can only decide by examining all the available evidence, remembering that indirect evidence must be taken into account as well as direct evidence. Modern Science has certainly pricked a good many bubbles. We can no longer take a fetish or a magician seriously, and most of us are strongly repelled by descriptions of the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion which seem to introduce the element of magic. Trivial mysteries we associate with a conjuror, not with the holy rites of the Christian religion. At the heart of the Christian religion is Mystery indeed: *mysterium tremendum*—'the light which no man can approach unto . . . the blessed and only Potentate . . . whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to

[1] *Letters*, 133.

whom be honour and power everlasting' (1 Ti $6^{15.16}$).

In conclusion let me turn again to the problem presented by the traditional Creeds. We must face the fact that they are a serious difficulty to many conscientious Christians and especially perhaps to some who have been trained in the school of Natural Science. Within the last few days a typical example has been brought to my notice. A doctor, a most excellent woman and a strong and regular supporter of the Church, feels herself barred from Confirmation because she will be required to assent to a form of words which she cannot regard as strictly true. I would beg so genuine a Christian to realize that reasonable liberty both of interpretation and of disagreement has now been won in most of the great Christian Communions, and certainly in the Church of England. And I would try to show how firmly founded the six main articles of the Creed are.

The first affirms belief in God as Supreme, God the Creator. But in the course of Creation, which is a process still going on, evil has somehow appeared. And therefore if Deity exists at all it is unthinkable that that Deity should not be manifested also in another rôle, namely as Redeemer. The second article of the Creed accordingly affirms belief in Jesus Christ, Divine Lord and Saviour. For us human beings this emergence of Deity in history is crucial and vital, and far the longest clause of the Creed is devoted to a summary of what the New Testament tells us about our Lord. Thus by its very arrangement the Creed pulls us up at this point in order to concentrate attention on this irruption of Divine Spirit into space-time.

The bursting of the atomic bomb two years ago conclusively demonstrated what colossal energy exists and can be made available. So, more than nineteen hundred years ago the coming of Christ and His life and work here on earth were not only in themselves a tremendous release of Divine Energy, but also a decisive incontrovertible demonstration of infinite Divine Energy, existing eternally and available in the here and now. 'Verily, verily, I say unto you'—so the Fourth Gospel reports our Lord's words (Jn 14^{12})—'He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do.' And the context of the passage shows that the reference is to the power of the Divine Spirit working in and through the believer. Hence the third article of the Creed inevitably follows: I believe in the Holy Ghost.

The Creed now passes on to a second section. The operation of the Holy Ghost on the human plane is not in and through the believer as an individual in isolation, but in and through the believer as a living member of an organic body, the believer in vital fellowship with the whole company of faithful people. The Church is, as it were, the home here on earth of the Spirit. So the fourth article of the Creed affirms belief in the Holy Catholic Church and the communion of Saints.

The activity of the Spirit in and through the Spirit-bearing members of the Church is essentially a redeeming, sanctifying activity. The next article of the Creed should naturally refer to that. And it does, though not perhaps exactly in the wording which we to-day would have chosen ourselves. But the phrase 'the forgiveness of sins' properly understood indicates sufficiently what is in mind. We believe that sins, lapses, misses of the mark, iniquities, wrongs—individual, corporate, cosmic—can be forgiven, and the harm done repaired and healed, so that the ultimate purpose of God may not be frustrated.

But the making good cannot be completed here in the order of time-and-space. This is obvious in the case of certain individuals—the boy who dies of cancer (to take one example alone). So we are compelled to believe in the life of the world to come. Again the wording of the Creed is not quite what we ourselves would have chosen. But the very strangeness of the phrase strikes in upon us the inherent relatedness of this life and the life to come. The life of eternity will receive, and kindly and correctly adjust, the carry-over from the life of time. 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right'? 'I believe in the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.'

Can it be regarded as unreasonable to give a general assent to a credal summary of this sort?

Many modern Churchmen nevertheless prefer a confession of Christian Faith and Duty in the words of St. John:

> We believe that God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.
>
> We believe that God is Light, and if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.
>
> We believe that God is Love, and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God.
>
> We believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.
>
> We believe that we are children of God, and He hath given us of His Spirit.
>
> We believe that if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.
>
> We believe that the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the Will of God abideth for ever.

'How very hard it is to be a Christian'—Browning was right. And Christians make it harder than it need be by putting the wrong accent on their canticles and hymns. From the

point of view of the intellect, however, it has become easier of recent years; and the call to fill the gaps in the depleted ranks of the Church is more urgent than ever. The Church of Christ is now like a beleaguered city and the enemy is relying more on a starving-out process than on direct attack. At a time like this neutrality is impossible, and the Captain of our Salvation asks now as always for a personal decision—'He that is not with me is against me.'

Literature.

THE CHRISTIAN FUTURE.

Professor Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, the author of a remarkable book, *The Christian Future or The Modern Mind Outrun* (S.C.M.; 8s. 6d. net), is already known in this country through the publication, shortly after the beginning of the War, of that strange but fascinating historical study, 'Out of Revolution.' It is to be hoped that the present volume, introduced as it is by Dr. Oldham, will greatly increase the circle of his readers. Having held a Chair at Dartmouth College, U.S.A., since 1935, he is one of the many distinguished scholars whose flight from Nazi Germany has been a source of enrichment to the British and American universities, though unfortunately the many books he wrote while still teaching at Leipzig and Breslau are now little likely to be translated.

Professor Rosenstock-Huessy's books do not make easy reading. They are written brightly and allusively and no page in them is ever dull; they reflect a deeply pondered and self-consistent outlook which embraces every aspect of intellectual and practical life within its scope; yet in the presentation of his material the author's mind moves in so unexpected a way, and makes so many surprising transitions, that the reader is, as it were, compelled to rearrange things in his own mind before coming to grips with the argument. The manner is a little reminiscent of Nietzsche, a little of Thomas Carlyle, a little of Kierkegaard.

Of the profundity of the book, however, there can be no doubt at all. Here is a massive defence of the Chrisian faith by a mind as deeply versed in the complexities of European history as in the practical problems of the contemporary world, and which finds the key to both in a deeper realization of the cruciality of the Cross. The historical generalizations are often brilliantly illuminating, but no less worthy of attention are the suggestions for the solution of our social problems—suggestions which have grown out of, and been tested by, the author's own long connexion with the Labour Camp Movement in Germany and the Civilian Conservation Corps in the United States. For those who have the patience to discover for themselves the pattern of its underlying unity, this book promises therefore a rich harvest. But we suspect that many readers will content themselves with those gleanings by the way of which it offers them an equally plentiful variety. Professor Rosenstock-Huessy's central concern is with the Christian view of time, with the meaning of history, and especially with the meaning of futurity. But, since any attempt at a systematic explanation of his teaching would carry us far beyond the assigned limits of this review, we must confine ourselves to offering a few random examples of the gleanings. 'The orthodox worshipper, the true Israel of the eternal God, is as uninterested in the times as the *Daily Chronicle's* week-day editions are in eternity. I had to speak on eternity to children of time as on our times to men of orthodoxy.' 'The pious hatred of the Puritans against curses has by now made man impotent to bless.' 'This modern man strikes me as the queerest combination of the best-informed and the most surprised human being. The public knows everything, and does not understand anything, that happens.' 'Most people to-day think that all organizations of size—states, corporations, labour unions, all the tremendous powers of the world—are rational, legal, mechanical, and we are asked to enter even bigger associations: Union Now, or the Classless Society, or the Union of all the Churches, or a fusion of all world religions. They are all logical and systematic. And in their centre there stands a typewriter. However, the only group which is really exciting at any minute and full of surprises because it is perfectly unsystematic, irrational, antilogical, and the poorest organization on earth . . . is the family. . . . In the centre of the family we do not find a typewriter, but a bed and a stove.' 'We can believe in the Last Judgement, because we have seen last judgements passed on Proust's France, Rasputin's Russia, Wilhelm II's Germany, and President Harding's America.' And this is of so-called natural theology: 'Such natural reason is really immature reason, like the philosophizing of a child prodigy who thinks before he has lived.'

John Baillie.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER.

Professor Francis Wright Beare, B.A., Ph.D., of Trinity College, Toronto, has written a useful and scholarly commentary on *The First Epistle of Peter* (Blackwell; 15s. net). He speaks of the ineffaceable impression of the masterly workmanship of Hort's unfinished commentary on the Epistle, but he has not been able to follow Hort in accepting its authenticity. On the contrary, for the first time he offers the English reader a commentary based on the thesis that the Epistle is a pseudonymous work of the post-Apostolic age. Influenced

by the works of Gunkel, Knopf, and Windisch, he dates First Peter A.D. 111–112, about the same time as Pliny's famous letter to Trajan, and accepts the view of Perdelwitz and Streeter that the Epistle consists of two documents composed by the same writer, a baptismal address (1^3–4^{11}) and a letter to a persecuted community (4^{12}–5^{11}), subsequently preceded by the fictitious introduction in $1^{1f.}$ and the concluding personal references in 5^{12-14}.

The most valuable part of the new commentary is in its competent lexical, grammatical, and exegetical notes. A reference to 'the almost universal neglect of Greek in the seminaries' reads oddly in British eyes, but it may serve to warn us of the depths to which we may yet sink if we listen to the counsels of those who want to make ministerial training 'more practical.' Professor Beare has constantly in mind the reader who knows little or no Greek, and he carefully explains the meaning of words, coupling with this a penetrating exegesis of the writer's thought in the light of other New Testament writings and earlier and contemporary ways of thinking. It is impossible to study this part of the commentary without gaining a fuller appreciation and understanding of this important letter.

Professor Beare's treatment of questions of Introduction is another matter. His discussion of the date of the Epistle, with special reference to the persecution implied, is almost perfunctory. The Neronic date is dismissed in a paragraph supplemented by a discussion of Ramsay's theory. Evidence pointing to the use of the Epistle in 1 Clement is dismissed, without examination, as falling 'far short of a demonstration.' The silence of the Muratorian fragment is felt to be significant. Dependence on several of the Pauline Epistles, 'including the deutero-Pauline Ephesians,' is accepted with the dubious explanation that 'all critics are now agreed that the dependence is on the side of First Peter.' The claim of Perdelwitz, that the teaching on baptism reflects a knowledge of the *Taurobolium*, is reluctantly set aside as 'too fragile,' but with the statement that it is impossible to escape from the fact that the Epistle shows traces of the terminology of the mystery-cults or the philosophy of religion associated with them. The submission that it could not have been written by an illiterate fisherman is reiterated, without a balanced discussion of the question whether Silvanus might not have had a share in its composition. More objectionable is the description of critics who take different views as 'those who are most determined to uphold the authenticity of the Epistle,' and the characterization of the Silvanus-hypothesis as 'the attempt to get around these hard and stubborn facts.' The Professor thinks that the case against the Petrine authorship is 'overwhelming' and is astonished that any one can think otherwise.

It is a great pity that Professor Beare's commentary was almost finished before Dean Selwyn's great work, 'The First Epistle of St. Peter' (1946), came into his hands. Had it been possible, it would have been of great interest to see his reply to the thesis that Paul and the author of First Peter were alike dependent upon existing catechetical forms, to Selwyn's dismissal of the alleged influence of the ideas of the mystery-religions upon the writer, and to his extended treatment of Christ's *Descensus ad Inferos*. The accidents of publication have precluded such a discussion, but, in default of this, we should like to have seen Professor Beare's view of the argument of Bishop Wand ('The General Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude' [1934]), that 'Moral Codes' have been used in the Pauline, Petrine, and Pastoral Epistles.

A word of appreciation must be added for the work of the publishers and printers in producing a work of this kind in these difficult times with few misprints, although the absence of Indexes is much to be regretted.

VINCENT TAYLOR.

THE 'WRITING' PROPHETS.

Since the eclipse of Germany it may almost be said that Scandinavia has taken the lead in Old Testament scholarship. Indeed, the British scholar who would keep abreast of Old Testament research is faced with the necessity of learning Swedish or Danish. The moving spirit in what is often called the 'Scandinavian School' has been Sigmund Mowinckel of Oslo. His latest publication is in English, and bears the title *Prophecy and Tradition: The Prophetical Books in the Light of the Study of the Growth and History of the Tradition* (Dybwad, Oslo; Kr. 10.00).

Though it is little more than a brochure (118 pages), this is a work of major importance. It is disfigured by too many typographical and spelling errors, and is not always as clear as it might be. Nevertheless, to most English readers it will be more intelligible than Norwegian, and it will enable them to get some idea of what the 'Scandinavian School' is after.

It is, perhaps, hardly correct to speak of the 'Scandinavian School,' for there are already sharp divisions of opinion within it. Mowinckel's *Prophecy and Tradition*, indeed, is something in the nature of a duel with Engnell of Uppsala. To explain: it is now generally agreed that behind the written sources of the Old Testament there lie centuries of oral tradition. There is 'form-criticism' and 'tradition-criticism' in Old as there is in New Testament study. Engnell would go so far as to do away with 'documents' entirely. As he sees it, what we have in the Old Testament is blocks of materials which have been accumulated by oral tradition alone. Further, he thinks it vain to hope that we can ever recover the *ipsissima verba* of the prophets. Mowinckel disputes this: he maintains that oral and written tradition developed together, and that the search for *ipsissima verba*, though difficult, is not *a priori* impossible.

In the second of his two chapters Mowinckel applies his methods to the study of the prophetical writings. Much of it is familiar to English readers in the writings of Dr. Theodore Robinson, who has been working for years along lines parallel

with Mowinckel's. It would appear that the term 'writing prophets' is a misnomer. The prophets were speakers, not writers, and the accounts we have of them and their messages have come down to us through tradition, written and oral, which has been preserved by their disciples.

The debate between Mowinckel and Engnell is no mere learned dispute about the merits of scissors and paste. It has important theological implications. What is the 'Word' of God? Is it the *ipsissima verba* of prophets, or the written books in which their words, fused together with later meditation and comment, have been enshrined? Or is it both? Mowinckel does not enter into these theological questions, but his book has an obvious bearing upon them. What he writes about the relations between the several parts of the Book of Isaiah is particularly illuminating. It has often been remarked that there are even Trito-Isaianic materials (Is 34–35) in Proto-Isaiah, and likewise Isaianic conceptions in both Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah. Mowinckel's explanation is that the prophetic impulse of Isaiah lived on for centuries among his disciples, to burst into flame once more in the great Prophet of the Exile, and again in the circle of Trito-Isaiah. Again, much of what we have in Jeremiah is Deuteronomic orthodoxy, and rather prosy. But it is clear that lesser men, the disciples of the masters, felt themselves sufficiently endowed with the Spirit to add something by way of supplement and even alteration to the words of the masters, and every now and again the prophetic fire would be rekindled among them. Both degrees of inspiration, the creative and the secondary, have been preserved in the pages of the Bible. Without prophets there could have been no disciples. Without the disciples the prophets would have been forgotten. The *ipsissima verba* are the Word of God, but so is the final deposit. It comes to this: we cannot profitably discuss inspiration without reference to the concept of the Church. C. R. North.

MORAL THEOLOGY.

Canon R. C. Mortimer, M.A., B.D., Regius Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology in the University of Oxford, has published a useful little treatise on popular lines of that branch of theology which is concerned to judge the rightness and wrongness of human actions, its special province being the consideration of the conduct which is enjoined on man by the law of God. The title is *The Elements of Moral Theology* (Black; 10s. 6d. net). The exposition is remarkably clear and well-sustained. It begins with the affirmation that man is a creature designed to know and love God. It goes on to affirm that if man is to fulfil the purpose of his Creator he must recognize himself to be under law, and that the broad pattern of the behaviour which the law of God dictates may be perceived by him by the exercise of his reason. Then the nature of those human actions upon which conscience passes judgment is considered, and the way prepared for the consideration of conscience itself. The remaining two-thirds of the book are devoted to the discussion of the Virtues, which are set forth in detail as the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love and the cardinal virtues of fortitude, temperance, justice, and prudence.

Canon Mortimer gives wise and helpful guidance on points of conduct, showing himself a master in the careful analysis of a moral situation. Where he feels doubt or difficulty, he is inclined to look for help to St. Thomas Aquinas, the references to his writings being carefully tabulated. Nor does he avoid the discussion of awkward and embarrassing questions, such as the use of contraceptives. His is a book to be commended, especially to those for whom it is especially designed, those in training for Orders, and the younger clergy.

W. Fulton.

P. T. FORSYTH.

The value of this volume, *The Work of Christ* (Independent Press; 10s. 6d. net), in the re-issue of P. T. Forsyth's writings is greatly enhanced by the charming and life-like portrait in the frontispiece, the brief Foreword by Dr. Whale, and the altogether delightful Memoir by his daughter, Mrs. Andrews, in which with unerring taste and rare felicity of style she shares with the reader her intimate knowledge of her father's career and her loving admiration for his character.

She begins with a sketch of his early home—he was the son of an Aberdeen postman and a Highland servant lass—and of the stern struggle for his education and of his brilliant student years when Robertson Nicoll and Robertson Smith were his friends. In his first two charges he became known as a challenging and attractive preacher, highly suspect by the orthodox and the conventional. People were surprised twenty years after his ordination to find him becoming an evangelical leader, but he himself said he had come through no sudden change of view but had simply grown in judgment and in concentration of interest through study and through pressure of pastoral responsibility.

One of the finest things in this short Memoir is Mrs. Andrews' generous tribute to her stepmother who married a broken-hearted, delicate, despondent widower much older than herself. 'She gave him a new hold on life, she renewed the zest he had lost. Her devoted care and perhaps still more simply her charm and personality made possible for him the twenty-four years in which his greatest work was done.'

At his death with an exaggeration pardonable in a close friend and colleague one wrote of P. T. Forsyth: 'The new spirit of evangelism in the Church to-day was made possible by the prophetic work of Forsyth.' Like his other books this one lets a reader understand how such a pronouncement could be made. It contains extempore lectures to a young ministers' conference. Two quotations will suggest their style and point of view. 'When Christ did what He did it was not human nature offering its very best to God, it was God offering His very best to man.' 'It is a poor Christ that can be housed in a poor creed, and a feeble prophet that is canonized when a sentimentalized ethic is offered as religion.'

R. W. Stewart.

THE SALVATION ARMY.

The History of the Salvation Army, vol. i., 1865–1878, by Colonel Robert Sandall (Nelson; 10s. 6d. net).

This is the first volume of the authoritative history of the Army, and deals with the early years, up to the adoption by the Movement of a military organization. It is to be followed by four others in which the expansion and world-wide activities of the organization will be described. No one could help being interested in the story of a body that has fought so good a fight for the salvation of men. Like many another it made its way against hosts of enemies among whom must be reckoned the police, the publicans and the mob. Its members have never lacked courage. Bishop Henson tells with gusto that when he was working in London a deputation of Salvationists invaded his study and told him that they were praying for him. At present he was Saul the Pharisee and they were praying that he might become Paul the Apostle. I am afraid that the corybantic religion of the Army was one of the Bishop's antipathies.

The Salvation Army was not the result of a planned movement. It grew out of many evangelical bodies working in the east-end of London, some of which coalesced into 'The Christian Mission.' When this body was firmly established it took on a military form, at first by accident. Mr. Booth was the 'General Superintendent' of the Mission, and he was referred to by his followers as 'The General,' without any idea of a military sense. This was the source of what became a deliberately adopted organization. The Christian Mission always thought of its activities as a fight; why not regard itself as an army of God? And so the name and martial form were assumed.

This preliminary volume is not very exciting. It suffers, as a human document, from the author's obvious sense of obligation to include everything. There are nineteen appendices giving all sorts of detail about early helpers, balance sheets, conditions of membership, and so on. But the story of the beginnings is told with a simplicity which makes its own impression, and we can see clearly enough the devotion and faith that carried these early witnesses through all opposition and in face of many almost insuperable difficulties. No doubt William Booth's theology helped. He believed, and his helpers believed, that the sinners they were seeking to save would burn in Hell for ever if they were not rescued. That was a terrific inducement to complete consecration. The work lay among the most abandoned sinners, and Booth was convinced that 'the best way to reach the masses was by an outside agency, specially adapted to their needs and independent of church usages and conventionalities.' Moreover, he was certain that these people must be saved by men and women of their own class. At first Booth regarded his mission as a link between the masses and the Church, but he was compelled by the convictions just stated to abandon this idea. Moreover, the methods he adopted showed great wisdom. The people he preached to were sunk in sensuality and if their souls were to be reached it must be by a kind of shock, by something blatant and not by anything refined or high-brow. Hence the brass bands and the kind of songs that were used. The saying about the Devil not having any right to the best tunes has been attributed to General Booth. Its author was really Rowland Hill. But Booth acted in the spirit of it. He spoke of the Devil only allowing to 'us' the crumbs that fall from his table, 'such as the Old Hundred and a few more funereal ditties!' But if we dislike Salvation Army 'music' we must realize that it was only such music that could reach and affect the souls of the people to be saved.

William Booth was both a great saint and a great dictator. He was an autocrat, as all who had to do with him in private life found. But humanly speaking, it was his grit and obstinacy and single-minded purpose which created a body that has done great things for God and for man. He was singularly free from the influence of tradition (unless in his theology). The place he gave to women in his organization is an instance, and the exclusion of Sacrament from his public worship is another. But from the day he abandoned pawnbroking and 'gave himself' to the saving of souls his career was that of one of the world's greatest religious figures.

F. J. RAE.

The need for a readable one-volume history of the Jews has long been widely felt. This need is now met by *A History of the Jews from the Babylonian Exile to the End of World War II*, by Dr. Solomon Grayzel (Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia; $3.50). The book contains 835 pages, and is beautifully produced. It is well arranged, and its style, though rather pedestrian, is clear and straightforward. There are a hundred and twenty-one illustrations, many of them unusual and striking. The twenty-four maps are excellent, with just enough detail to illustrate the text without confusing the reader. There are no footnotes, and the bibliography is general, not specialized. The work is divided into five books: (1) The Second Commonwealth (586 B.C.–A.D. 135); (2) The Supremacy of the East (A.D. 70–1000); (3) The Jews in the West; (4) Retreat and Progress; (5) The Search for a Friendly Home. Dr. Grayzel's handling of the materials for the closing centuries B.C. is quite uncritical. His account of Jesus ('Joshua of Nazareth') and early Christianity is jejune in the extreme. His attitude to contemporary problems is that of American Jewry, and he is severely critical, not to say bitter, towards Britain. But these defects should not deter the English Christian reader. From Dr. Grayzel's pages he will be able to fill in what is probably a large blank in his historical knowledge. His sympathies will be awakened and he will come to understand why the Jewish question is so perplexing as it is. It is a heroic story, and a conspicuous merit of Dr. Grayzel's telling of it is that he does not dwell unduly on its more tragic aspects.

It scarcely needs to be said that anything written by the present Bishop of London is well worth reading. Dr. Wand in everything he writes impresses by his scholarship and his Christian breadth of outlook. So with high expectation we took up his *The Spirit of Church History* (Mowbray; 5s. net). It is a small book containing a course of lectures delivered under the auspices of the Adult Education Committee of the London Diocesan Board of Education in Lent, 1947. And the lectures were delivered extempore. The Bishop aimed at giving Clergy a 'refresher course,' but in his own words 'the laity gate-crashed the proceedings.' The treatment was modified to suit that circumstance.

In the first four chapters—The Foundation, The Conquest of Empire, The Conquest of Barbarism, Authority *v.* Freedom—Dr. Wand has performed a large task with extraordinary skill and success. Obviously the treatment must be slight, but he does enable one to see the wood rather than the trees. For a beginner in the study of Church History nothing more helpful can be recommended than this.

The last chapter is on 'The Anglican Synthesis.' The attempt is made to show how since the break with Rome the Anglican Church has been holding out one hand to Rome and the East and the other to Evangelicals, and how the Anglican Church is fitted to be the rallying point for the reunion of Christendom. As to this, one fears, opinions will differ, and some may feel that Dr. Wand seems to ignore the difficulties. Yet, even here, opponents can only be grateful for so temperate an exposition of how the Anglican synthesis is conceived by those who believe in it.

The Religious Education Press has put, and continues to put, the religious world under a real debt of gratitude for its carefully considered and well-conceived series of books on all the problems of education, particularly religious education. Two books have reached us under their auspices, both of them first-rate, on widely different regions of life. One is an earnest plea by an experienced and well-equipped teacher for attention to the foundations—*Primary Education and the Art of Living*, by Miss Olive M. Wyatt (2s. 6d. net). It deals with the basic importance of the Primary School in educational reform. The author thinks that in our new zeal for Secondary School training we are losing sight of the earlier stage on which the whole edifice of life is built. The second book, *A Theology for Youth*, by Mr. Henry David Gray, Ph.D. (5s. net), is concerned just with those seniors to whom Miss Wyatt thinks we are paying too exclusive attention. It is a book of apologetics which is designed to answer the questions, and face the problems of the adolescent. An important task well done. A third book is for the Adult School. It is in fact the Adult School Handbook for 1947—*This Believing World* (National Adult School Union; 2s. and 3s. net) and contains a scheme of study for Adult Schools which includes religious and secular themes. Two out of many may be mentioned: 'In Search of a Philosophy of Life,' and 'Food and Agriculture.' There is an interesting variety of themes in the book, and each theme is treated by a different author.

The Rev. Henry R. T. Brandreth, a priest of the Oratory of the Good Shepherd, has published a learned book on episcopal vagrantism in relation to the Anglican Church. The Lambeth Conference of 1948 is going to discuss the problem that arises for the Anglican Church from the existence of various ecclesiastical bodies which claim authentic Orders and are outside the great communions. This book is written primarily for the information of the Bishops at the Lambeth Conference, and is said to be the first full study of the subject. It is a study painful to a man holding the author's convictions, for it has brought him into contact with light-hearted traffickers in holy things, as many of the *episcopi vagantes* were. Canon J. A. Douglas writes a Foreword to the book, which is entitled, *Episcopi Vagantes and the Anglican Church* (S.P.C.K.; 6s. 6d. net). He explains that the phrase, *episcopi vagantes*, describes bishops who without canonical authority intrude themselves into the jurisdiction of other bishops, and he adds that while some of the vagrant bishops named by Father Brandreth have been of patent sincerity and simplicity of life, others have been megalomaniacs or paranoiacs, and often of ill-repute. Their single common characteristic has been their claim to valid episcopal Orders derived from an historic Church having an unchallengeable apostolic succession. It is a question of real importance whether or not, on being received into the Anglican Communion, men who have received putative Orders from Mathew and Vilatte should be re-ordained. The Mathew, Vilatte, and other Successions are here tabulated with punctilious care.

The First General Assembly of the World Council of Churches is to meet at Amsterdam next August, and ought to be one of the greatest occasions in all the long history of Christianity. In a compact, comprehensive and brilliant little book, *Pilgrimage to Amsterdam* (S.C.M.; 3s. net), Canon H. G. G. Herklots aims at popularizing knowledge of the motives and growth of the Oecumenical Movement in the World Church, its organization and functioning, and the complex considerations and problems that are involved in steering it to effective usefulness. It deserves the most careful study in the widest possible circles, for, as he stresses, the vitality of the movement depends on the genuine interest and concern of individual Christians and particular congregations and churches.

There is just one sentence that is regrettable, the quotation of Dr. Oldham's censure of Communism, which runs: 'Communism denies both in theory and practice the reality of objective truth and justice.' To be true the sentence would require the word 'abstract' instead of 'objective.' Communism on the principle that theory and practice are the same refuses the conception of abstract truth or justice. The refutation of Communism is not achieved by such a remark.

The Church and Christian Marriage To-day.

By the Reverend A. J. Betteridge, Trowbridge, Wilts.

1. *The Problem Confronting the Church.* The changes in civil law permitting divorce for a variety of reasons and offering facilities to all irrespective of means have resulted in a vast increase of cases, and the Courts have had to devise special means to cope with the demand. But that which is legal is not necessarily Christian. Whatever civil law may decree for subjects of the temporal realm there is for the Christian the higher law of the Kingdom of God which it is the Church's responsibility to teach and administer in her Lord's name.

Clearly the marriage service of the Church sets forth a conception of marriage very different from that set forth by the provisions for divorce in civil law. Christian marriage is the occasion of vows which pledge the parties, either to other, for better for worse, until death separates them. If in the view of the Church the provisions in civil law for divorce are right and proper according to the revealed mind of Christ, then those vows should be modified accordingly. If, however, the vows represent the true Christian attitude to marriage, then the Church needs to determine whether other than avowed Christians shall be married within the Church, and whether persons so married, who afterward avail themselves of divorce facilities, shall continue to be regarded as members of the Church and avail themselves again, if they so desire, of the right to marry and repeat the same vows to another partner.

The time has now come when the Church needs to consider afresh the teaching of her Lord and seek the guidance of His Spirit that she may not, on the one hand, condone sin, or, on the other hand, frown upon those who accept the means at their disposal to solve personal problems of the most pressing kind, and so that in neither case may the Church be found wanting as the mouthpiece of God to this generation.

With a view to clarifying the issue the teaching of Jesus is here examined, and the Christian attitude arising from His teaching indicated.

2. *The Teaching of Jesus Concerning Marriage and Divorce.* Jesus regarded the union of married persons as spiritual and therefore of eternal significance, just as Baptism and the Lord's Supper symbolize a union of spirit with spirit which nothing can divide. Did Jesus intend no more than the literal sense of His words in Mk 10^{8}: 'they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh'? It is submitted that the omission of the word flesh would not alter His meaning but rather throw it into high relief. This view is upheld by the fact that the New Testament regards marriage as a true symbol of the union of Christ and His Church, a union which is spiritual and eternal and from which there is no possibility of divorce, death having been conquered by our Lord. There is only one argument based on Scripture against this view. *It is founded on our Lord's answer to the Sadducees'* tricky question concerning Levirate marriage and the presumed complications arising if there were to be life after death (cf. Mt 22^{23-33}). The Sadducees 'which say there is no resurrection' constructed a hypothetical case in which a woman had been married successively to seven brothers and they assumed that resurrection necessarily involves the raising of the body, which it did for Hebrew thought. Envisaging a situation in heaven in which all the evil potentialities of the 'eternal triangle' were present sevenfold, lust and jealousy predominantly, they asked Jesus, in effect, 'Who is going to enjoy her there as here on earth'? In the very nature of the case the questioners had the physical aspect uppermost in mind. Jesus answered, 'in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels in heaven.' The answer makes two affirmations: (*a*) marriage, as conceived here, with physical concomitants, is not entered into there; (*b*) the resurrected are as the angels—they are spirit and not flesh. Jesus did not say or imply that the spiritual union entered into here is dissolved by death and has no significance in heaven, for He had come to demonstrate the indissolubility of spiritual ties by Himself rising from the dead.

That Jesus was not primarily concerned with the physical aspect of marriage is borne out by His condemnation of the laxity of the Mosaic code which allowed for weaknesses of the flesh (cf. Mk 10^{4-6}). 'They said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.' Similarly Jesus regarded adultery as something deeper and more inward than the physical act, a wrongness of spirit long before the stage of outward sin is reached (cf. Mt 5^{28}).

In Mk 10^{2-12} we find Jesus dealing explicitly

with divorce in reply to an inquiry. He declares—

(*a*) That Moses departed from the Divine purpose when he permitted divorce, for God created human beings in pairs (*vv.*[5. 6]).
(*b*) That those who come together as man and wife become one (*v.*[8]).
(*c*) That man must not divorce whom God hath united (*v.*[9]).
(*d*) That a divorcer, marrying, commits adultery (*vv.*[11. 12]).

Lk 16[18] records the categorical statement by our Lord—

(i) That a divorcer, marrying, commits adultery.
(ii) That anyone marrying a divorcee commits adultery.

Mt 5[31-32] suggests that Jesus recognized an exception, permitting divorce 'for the cause of fornication.' But as it stands the passage runs counter to the explicit statements of our Lord recorded in Mk 10 and Lk 16, and presents a surprising weakness in a strongly worded context throughout which Jesus places His authority before that of Moses, bringing to perfection the imperfect Mosaic interpretation of the Divine Law. The formula 'Ye have heard . . . But I say unto you . . .' is found in *vv.*[21. 22, 27. 28, 33. 34, 38. 39, 43. 44] as well as in these two verses. The reference in *v.*[31] is to Dt 24[1-4], an attempt to restrict an undesirable practice. Close scrutiny of *v.*[32] suggests that the clause 'saving for the cause of fornication' conditions the statement 'maketh her an adulteress' and should be transposed to follow it. In other words, divorce makes the divorced woman an adulteress unless already she is guilty. If this transposition is made the verse reads: 'But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife causeth her to commit adultery (saving for the cause of fornication); and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery'; with the result that this passage no longer presents a weakness in its context, and agrees with the statements of the Divine Law recorded in Mk 10 and Lk 16.

Mt 19[3-9] is parallel with Mk 10 except for *v.*[9]. This verse in the Greek text is complicated by several variants, but the Revised Version Margin brings it into line with Mt 5[32] and reads, 'I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress; and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery.'

1 Co 7[10] has an important bearing upon this issue because Paul emphatically states that he is inspired by the Lord to give the charge 'that the wife depart not from her husband (but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband); and let not the husband put away his wife.'

From the foregoing it is clear that in the view of Jesus divorce creates the adulterous situation where fornication is not cited as the reason for divorce, and multiplies the adulterous situation when fornication is the cause. The divorcer breaks a spiritual relationship, and remarrying, gives to another what is no longer his to give, and creates that 'triangle' of personalities which is sinful and in which the divorced person is, however unwillingly, involved. So also if anyone marries a divorced person the adulterous situation is brought into being because that person seeks to receive of the divorcee the love and loyalty which is no longer theirs to bestow. The fleshly act is an altogether subordinate concern save as indicative of the spiritual state of affairs, and the question whether the 'innocent party' should not be regarded differently from the 'guilty party' (the red herring inevitably trailed across all discussions of this subject) is seen to be irrelevant to the spiritual issue.

According to the teaching of Jesus marriage is the union of two personalities, two eternal spirits, and such union is indissoluble. Divorce is the dishonouring of the sacrament of marriage and is sinful: the marriage of a divorced person, and marriage to a divorced person, are adulterous acts.

We come now to consider:

3. *The Christian View of Marriage To-day.* The practice of solemnizing marriage in our churches is indicative of our conviction that the union of two persons is of more than personal significance and social importance. The parties declare their vows in the church rather than make a declaration in a municipal building because they believe their marriage is of significance to God. He it is who has brought them together. His abiding blessing is essential to the success of the adventure to which their two lives are committed. Over and above the desires of their hearts there is a Divine purpose to be worked out in their united life. In this sense at least Christian marriage is sacramental, for it is an action on the human plane of concern to God and men and by which man becomes bound in service or fellowship with God. 'Marriage was ordained of God' declares the Order of Service commonly used in the Free Churches, and 'instituted of God' according to the Book of Common Prayer. It is therefore a unique relationship in which two spirits become one, enriching each other permanently in a way not otherwise possible. Having been established by

God the union and enrichment of personality is held to be of eternal significance. Death is but a temporary interruption and cannot destroy the union. It is certain that neither party conceives of the possibility of the disruption of their union, save on the physical plane by death. The generally held conviction is that love is stronger than death. The marriage vows provide against all contingencies this side of the grave: 'I call upon these persons here present to witness that I, —— do take thee —— to be my lawful wedded husband/wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance, and thereto I give thee my troth.'

Sin, however, 'croucheth at the door.' How is the situation to be faced when human hopes and ideals have in fact been spoiled? The temptation to divorce must often commend itself with tremendous strength. Against it the high ideal of Christian marriage should be maintained by the Church and in cases of the apparent breakdown of marriage the parties should be exhorted and assisted to exercise patience, show a forgiving spirit, and manifest the grace of Christ and seek the help of God to restore and renew. Love is the essence of the union entered upon in Christian marriage, and Christian love should increasingly proximate to Divine love as set forth by Paul in 1 Co 13. The effect of sin upon love and the union established in love, is to spoil the relationship, but sin cannot destroy true love. Sin in the ultimate, as self will, can finally separate spirit from spirit and even separate the soul from God, but sin as an objective act cannot separate, because love, Divine and human, can forgive and by suffering redeem. Love beareth all things. Love never faileth. God does not cast us off when we sin against him. He brings all the power of redeeming love to bear upon us. In so far as human love becomes like unto God's love it will not be able to cast off the offending partner however grievous the offence, and will certainly not fall below the Old Testament high-water mark portrayed in Hosea who was constrained to seek out and redeem his unfaithful partner.

Should one of the partners sin grievously against the other and live apart, the sin would be forgiven on the one hand and repented of on the other and the union be perfectly realized in the eternal realm. Should one of the partners refuse the grace of God and die spiritually and not enter the eternal realm, then the other would be eternally bereaved, even as God must sorrow eternally over his 'lost' children and carry the cross in His heart eternally.

It should be emphasized that divorce for any reason is sinful in God's sight, because it precludes the possibility of love and grace restoring the breach. Even where the one partner forsakes the other and lives in adultery with another person there is the possibility of repentance and return after long delay. Meanwhile the injured partner carries a heavy cross indeed, though not beyond that visualized in the marriage vow—'For better for worse'—'until death us do part.' Similarly it is conceivable that a person certified as insane may recover. In such cases the marriage has not been determined in God's sight and the divorce and remarriage of the partner would result in the adulterous situation condemned by Jesus.

In almost every realm the sanctity of the pledged word has been discarded with disastrous consequences for our civilization. The Church can lead this generation back to stability by being true to her Lord and declaring His mind upon this issue which goes to the heart of human happiness, the well-being of the home and the health of the State.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Candles.

By the Reverend John W. Coutts, D.D.,
St. Fillans, Perthshire.

'The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord.'—Pr 20^{27}.

If you look at a large calendar you will find that one of the days is called Candlemas Day. On this day, in olden times, they used to bring candles church and light them. Partly in honour of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, because she had the supreme honour of bringing the Light into our dark world. But partly, also, I think, because in our dark northern Februaries it gave people hope of the brighter and better days that were coming. This is suggested in the old Scots rhyme:

If Candlemas day be bright and clear,
The half of the winter's tae come and mair;
If Candlemas Day be dark and foul,
The half of the winter was past at Yule.

There's often a good deal of truth in these old country sayings. They were the fruit of long

experience and weather wisdom. A very early spring, they found, was apt to be followed by hard frost and bad weather; but after a severe January and February there often came a real spring. In any case the candles not only lighted up the church, they lighted the hearts of the people as well.

We have such bright lights now, with our high-powered electric bulbs, that we rather disdain candles. But candle-light is still the most pleasant form of illumination for a room. It is not so glaring as electric light. And in the old days candles were a great source of good cheer and happiness. They keep their place in memory; for we still talk of other lights as having so much candle-power. In the House of Commons, which has a great knack of reminding us of the past by its use of old phrases and ways of speech, if, on a winter's day, it grows suddenly dark so that the Members cannot see, one of them rises and says: 'Mr. Speaker! I beg to move that candles be brought in.' The electric light is turned on. But even in that phrase the House is reminded of old days.

This text in Proverbs says that we can all be candles, bringing light and cheer to others; for the spirit of man, it says, is the candle of the Lord. God lights up other people's lives by our spirits, if they are brave and clear. 'When a cheerful man comes into a room,' says one of our bravest writers, 'it is as if another candle had been lit.' We all know people like that. They may not be extremely clever, or very grand folk; but their simple good nature brightens us up whenever we meet them. They do good in the best possible way, just by being themselves.

It was said of one of the very greatest scientists this country ever produced that he made faith in goodness easier for others; and thousands of people who could not have understood his books were cheered and helped by the man.

Do you remember how Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* says:

> How far that little candle throws his beams!
> So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

We don't use candles very much now, but we can all help to bring cheer and light into the darkness of the world if we turn our faces to Christ and reflect the Light of the World.

V.I.P.I.

By the Reverend P. N. Bushill, B.A.,
Seaford, Sussex.

'I will make a man more precious than fine gold.'—Is 13^{12}.

Travelling is not easy in these days, and for long distances, whether by train, by boat, or by plane, one needs to make inquiries a long time ahead, with a view to booking a passage. Your name goes on a waiting list, but even then it does not always mean that you will be sure of your place when your turn in the queue comes. The Government has another list, and they claim preference, or priority as it is called, over ordinary passengers. Such people are labelled 'V.I.P.,' and certain aeroplanes of the R.A.F. are allotted specially to take 'V.I.P.s' at a moment's notice. 'V.I.P.'? What does it mean? do you say? 'Very Important Person.' They have priority over other travellers. But the other day I heard of a class even above this. *The Times*, referring to the coming of a Jewish delegate to an important Conference in London, reported: 'a spokesman of the Jewish Agency to-day said he had heard that Rabbi Fishman travelled not as a "V.I.P.," but as a "V.I.P.I."', and *The Times* kindly interpreted that for us simple folk as signifying 'Very Important Person Indeed.' Well, as regards travelling, you and I cannot hope ever to be classed as 'V.I.P.I.', or even as the more common 'V.I.P.'; we must just take our place in the queue, and hope for the best.

But perhaps you may be a 'V.I.P.I.' after all. Here is a story of a boy who quite unknowingly got into that important class. A large convoy of ships was ploughing its way through a rough sea infested with enemy ships. Suddenly all came to a standstill, and then quickly gathered round one of the small destroyers. What had happened? A boy on that destroyer was critically ill, and the doctor could not operate while the ship was lurching through the stormy waters; so the Commander had given the order for all the ships to form a sort of breakwater, thus giving some calm to the destroyer inside the ring. And all these men were willing to risk their lives for the sake of this one lad. 'V.I.P.I.' Why was that, I wonder? Because of his need, and because there were some who cared for him, and wanted to save his life.

And when you come to Church, and listen to the gospel story of Jesus dying for you, do you realize that you, too, are a 'V.I.P.I.'? 'What man of you,' said Jesus, 'having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?' That is your value in God's sight. 'V.I.P.I.' Some one worth dying for. Therefore you will not fritter away this precious life of yours for which Christ died; you will want to thank Him, and serve Him all the days of your life. 'Ye are not your own,' said Paul, 'ye are bought with a price.'

The Christian Year.

First Sunday after Epiphany.

The Consecrated Life.

By the Reverend R. J. Wedderspoon, M.A.,
Cheam.

'And Jesus said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?'—Lk 2^{49}.

Silence reigns in Scripture over the life of Jesus until He reaches full manhood and begins that ministry which is to shake the world. Of the

growing Jesus only one glimpse is vouchsafed to us, but it is a highly significant one. As the mists can disappear on a sudden and give a full view of the mountain, so this incident reveals not perhaps the craggy eminence of His final Calvary dedication, but certainly the majesty of controlled passion that can hold even a child in thrall. 'Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?'

Joseph and Mary had lost Him. He was only twelve years of age. When at last they found Him He was in the midst of all the Doctors of the Law in the Temple. To the somewhat justifiable complaints that Joseph and Mary made there came the unexpected reply: 'Don't you understand that My Father's business comes first, before every thing else?'

This famous incident may well introduce us to the subject of Consecration, for that is something that concerns every one. It has nothing to do with age or class or period of history. It is perhaps the strongest impelling force to which any human being can be subjected. It can be recognized afar off, and it operates with uncanny power, for there is nothing to equal in sheer intensity the consuming flame of a consecrated life.

No one is really surprised that in the life of Jesus this incident should find a place. No, for His life was all of a piece. Dissect it where you will, sooner or later you cut right through to this core of burning purpose, the fulfilment of which everything else must subserve. In a sense consecration is a terrifying thing, for it brushes aside all lesser loyalties, spurns every shallow compromise, and marches with steely precision to its goal. It is arithmetically weak, for it can never count the cost. Computations, indeed, and reckonings of all sorts are alien to it. All that matters is the one grand transcending purpose. 'Don't you understand,' cried the boy Jesus, only twelve, 'My Father's business claims Me even now.' He thought, lived, planned, and prayed in terms of it, always.

The notable fact here is that Jesus should feel this consecrating power, with its absolute compulsions, even in early youth. Most boys, we may claim, are held in the grip of some inner compulsion of a sort before they reach the later 'teens. There is a secret urge which may be the result of hereditary influences, or with which on the other hand hereditary influences may have nothing at all to do. At the behest of that urge all other subsidiary pulls are ignored. It is recognized as imperative and commanding. How many a boy, offered, say, an assured career in the family business, has not been in the slightest degree attracted. Robert Louis Stevenson, descended from generations of lighthouse builders, knew himself to be devoted, consecrated if you will, to literature, and nothing could have turned him aside. How many a man, professionally settled and assured, has chosen hardship and austerity as his portion. Albert Schweitzer's renunciation is perhaps in many ways outstanding in modern times, but in the Christian story it can be paralleled over and over again. Men who are, in Kipling's phrase, 'festooned with all the haberdashery of success,' lay all that aside when the imperious summons comes.

Inevitably the question arises here: What do we expect to get out of life? What do we live for? In an age like our own, increasingly dominated by economic considerations, and largely materialistic in outlook, it is sometimes difficult for youth to isolate this question and give it the attention it deserves.

Frank O'Connor, the Irish novelist, has a short story, *The Miser*. It describes how the old man, the miser, had two great iron-bound chests that all believed to contain untold wealth. The priest gets him to make his will, and to leave legacies here and there. When he dies they cannot get the chests open quickly enough to see what they contain. But when the contents are disclosed there are revealed old screws, bolts, washers, bits of broken vases, cogwheels of clocks, and an enormous number of pipe-bowls and stems. 'We were had, Eddy, we were had, Eddy boy, the lot of us,' the priest says.

We are always 'had,' are we not, when money is the sole objective. The mere getting of money is a poor substitute for a rich and satisfying devotion to a great cause. The only question that matters is, Does my work, whatever it be, contribute to the carrying out of my Father's business? Does it lead to an ever-enlarging experience? Is it a consecrated task? Whatever our calling in life may be, let it be related to 'my Father's business,' let it be something that is building not the sand-castles that the rushing rivers of time will remorselessly sweep away, but the rock-ramparts of achievement that all eternity's vast spaces will only magnify and silhouette the more.

Alice Meynell wrote an unusual kind of poem when she was quite young. She called it 'A Letter from a Girl to her own Old Age.'

Oh, in some hour of thine my thoughts shall guide thee.
Suddenly, though time, darkness, silence hide thee,
This wind from thy lost country flits beside thee,—

The one who now thy faded features guesses,
With filial fingers thy grey hair caresses,
With morning tears thy mournful twilight blesses.

Yes, we may declare, the wind from the lost country of youth, if it has been a dedicated youth, will continue to blow beside you in old age, even though 'time, darkness, silence, hold thee.' The consecrating influence of youth is never lost. George Meredith could say of Alice Meynell, 'Her manner presents an image of one accustomed to walk in holy places, and keep the eye of a fresh mind in a tangled world.' Surely the secret was that in early youth she had found Christ.

Is it not complete and utter consecration that is our chief lack to-day? 'We have left all and followed Thee.' When the great summons came to Jesus Himself, all home ties were transcended. He found His brother, sister, and mother in any

who were prepared to do the will of God. Over and over again this absolute consecration has sent men and women to attempt the most hopeless tasks to all appearance. But what notable and lasting successes have been achieved! Take the story of Stephen Grellet the Quaker. A French aristocrat, driven from France at the time of the French Revolution, he came under the influence of the Friends in America. His subsequent consecrated journeyings make a marvellous story of the Divine leading. He could speak 'with piercing exactitude to the condition of a person who was a complete stranger to him.' He had not a little to do with Elizabeth Fry's taking up the work of Prison Reform. He experienced the direct leading of the Spirit of God, and even though this be a realm in which it is easy to be deceived, there is evidence enough that the leading was there.

Let us, therefore, have more consecration, that in a world that is sadly perplexed and troubled we may as Christians in the performance of our daily duty bring light and healing and peace.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Readiness is All.

BY THE REVEREND GEO. W. H. LOUDON, B.D., S.T.M., CALLANDER.

'I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.'—Ro 1^{15}.

'Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you.'—2 Co 12^{14}.

'I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.'—Ac 21^{13}.

'For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.'—2 Ti 4^{6}.

It would be no doubt an exaggeration to say that there is no virtue in eagerness—in the mere fact of being ready. That leaves another fact out of account—the fact that when the eagerness, readiness, is gone out of life, then life itself is in large measure gone also. Yet it is true that eagerness is the raw material of virtue, rather than virtue itself; the raw material, indeed, of either virtue or its opposite. That much becomes obvious if only we recall a form of eagerness that found frequent expression some fifteen to twenty years ago. At that time, when the slump and its consequences were sending the unemployment figures soaring, do you remember the advertisements that used to appear? 'Young man; keen; not afraid of hard work; untrained, but willing to learn. Would consider anything.' Of course, a great many of them did not mean quite that; they meant 'anything which offers honest and honourable work.' But there were some, as no doubt there still are, who were prepared, either from need or from greed, to ask no questions about the honesty of the work, provided it put money in their pockets. Eagerness, then, is the raw material out of which virtue may come; but it all depends on the answer which is made to the inquiry, 'Eager for *what*?'

What St. Paul says of himself in the texts just quoted is precisely *not* that he is ready for anything. He tells us, quite plainly and definitely, what he *is* ready for. He has made definite committal of himself, in all eagerness and preparedness, to certain definite lines of thought and conduct. And it is at these committals, and their nature, that we are now to look.

1. First, then, consider this: 'I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.' To any one who knew the Apostle, that must have seemed an almost unnecessary remark. We need not, then, pause to ask whether he needed to assure the Roman Christians of his eagerness; but we should certainly pause until we are confident that the meaning of that assurance is not hidden from ourselves.

'I am ready,' says the Apostle, 'to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.' Certainly he had guidance to give and light to shed on the meaning of the Christian faith that others had not yet achieved. But that is not what he is offering, not what he is talking about, here; and he does not regard what he is promising to do as being in any way out of the ordinary. 'To be ready to preach the gospel' was simply the frame of mind he expected to discover, not in himself only, but in every Christian.

Any one who has ever read it must remember Ian Maclaren's story of the young minister getting ready to preach his first sermon. He was a very young man, and so, of course, his sermon was to be a very learned and a very grand affair. But at the crucial moment there came to him his old aunt, who had looked after him since his parents died, and this was her request: 'When you preach to your people on the morn, laddie, you'll say a good word for Jesus Christ'? *That's* what St. Paul is talking about here; that is what he expected to find, not in himself only, but in every Christian.

How do we stand to-day, in that regard—you and I? I think we have got it into our heads that words are not needed in such an affair—that it is enough to let our deeds speak for us. That may be true, sometimes, but it is not true always, and in our present state I would even say that it is not true often. There are so many differing voices, so many clamorous voices, to be heard in the world to-day; and all of them are bearing witness to this belief or that, this theory or that, this or that recipe for world happiness and content. Is it right, in all this, that we should hold our peace? Is it right that we should not be ready to preach the gospel—*to say a good word* for Jesus Christ?

2. And then, consider Paul's second expression of readiness: 'Behold, the third time I am ready to come unto you.' He wrote that to the Church in Corinth; and behind it there lies an amazing story of ingratitude on the one side, and graciousness, or grace, on the other. The Church in Corinth was a quarrelsome Church. Behind Paul's back the Corinthians criticised and sneered; when he came among them they treated him with contempt; and much of his correspondence with them is devoted to the attempt to make them see the error of their ways. In the long run, that attempt

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was successful; but the words before us were written before Paul could know the full measure of his success. None the less, he tells them that despite their ungratefulness and their offensiveness towards him, he will not abandon or desert the cause of Christ in their midst. He had taught them by his preaching; now he would teach them again—by his perseverance.

These are things that we ought to return to, in our thinking about the faith, if only because of the much-needed corrective they can supply to it. It is so easy for us to fall into the way of contrasting our lot with that of those earliest Christians, and to tell ourselves that we have one difficulty, one problem, which they never had: the problem or difficulty that comes not from those outside the Church, but is created by some of those who are within. We are too ready to contrast that Early Church with ourselves, seeing them as a little group of enthusiasts, wholly united to defy the world, while we appear a very mixed and Laodicean body, with many among us whose inclination is not to defy the world but to come to terms with it. But that is a false contrast, as the very word 'Laodicean' should remind us; for it is the New Testament itself that teaches us to use that word of anything that is lukewarm or half-hearted in its loyalty. This kind of contrast, in truth, is nothing but self-pity, and there is no cure to be found in self-pity for this or any other ailment of our spirit. None the less, the cure does exist, and it is to be found in the practice of that gracious and grace-inspired perseverance of which St. Paul gave example when he wrote: 'Behold, the third time I am ready to come unto you.'

3. And now, look at this readiness of Paul's in its last phase, the phase that is described in our third and fourth texts. 'I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die . . .' 'I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.' Of the two the second is the clearer and more definite; it leaves us in no doubt how Paul thought of the death for which he announced himself to be ready. He saw it as a sacrifice, an offering of himself to the God by whom he had been made, and by whom in Christ he had been made new.

How many of us, I wonder, could say with any truth, 'I am ready to die'? Remember that it is not the voice of resignation, or the pathetic helplessness of old age, that is speaking. 'Paul the aged' was no spent force, no burned-out fire. Yet he could say in all sincerity: 'I am ready to die'; and the explanation of his readiness lies in his thought, to which I have just referred, about the nature of his death. But once more the question thrusts itself upon us. How many of us are there who can say, in the strength of the same belief as St. Paul held, 'I am ready to be offered'?

Isn't the truth—the sorry truth—simply this: that we've forgotten, or lost sight of, this whole side of the matter? We don't think of life as reaching its end or goal through death; we think of it as reaching its end *or finish* there. We don't share the belief of St. Paul that his offering up of himself through death was the consummation of his earthly life, his final grasping, if we may so describe it, of that eternal joy, of which he had so far had only a foretaste and an anticipation: the completing of his return, through Christ and in Christ, to all that he had wandered from, and all that God had meant him for. It was for all this—yes, and for much more than this, since no human tongue can describe the things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard—it was for all this, which God from all eternity has prepared and made ready for us, that Paul proclaimed himself to be ready and prepared. This is what all his other readiness, all his other preparing, was fitting him for. And this is what we, by our preparedness or unpreparedness, may obtain, or may fail to obtain. The readiness is all.

SEPTUAGESIMA.

Going Astray.

'I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.'—Ps 119^{176}.

The hundred and nineteenth Psalm is not one of the Psalms to which we instinctively turn for help and inspiration. Its length, its artificial divisions, and even its theme—the Law of God—we find somewhat forbidding.

Yet it repays study, for again and again there breaks forth a piece of insight, showing that here speaks a deeply spiritual mind from whom we can learn. And of this not the least evidence is the last verse of all. One might have expected that after a hundred and seventy-five verses of meditation on so high a theme the writer would have sought to mount to a climax. But he does not do so. He ends on a note of wistful confession and prayer. As though, after all else is said, the last thing which a man must say, and must ever come back and say again, about God's Law of Holiness, is that he has not kept it.

1. But even more noteworthy are the words in which this concluding confession is expressed. There is a restraint, a refusal to make himself out to be worse than he really is, in this confession and prayer, which impresses us at once with a sense of reality and truth. The man is in a real world. He has gone astray, but there are different ways of going astray, and certain ways have not been his way.

One likes very much the quiet realism of this man, whoever he is, this refusal either to extenuate or to exaggerate the moral facts about himself. A man who should go about uttering eulogiums of his own holiness we should heartily despise; but a man who goes about uttering exaggerated condemnations of his own wickedness we are inclined to regard with more toleration. It seems to be more in the right direction as it is certainly more in the accepted tradition of Christian piety. Yet it is not in reality a whit more preferable. The soul needs truth as the body needs air. Let us confess our sins, but let us first pray that we may see them for what they really are.

2. And how true this metaphor of going astray

like a lost sheep is. It so perfectly describes the moral and spiritual state of most of us. There are indeed other ways of going astray. Some go astray like ravening wolves, some like sly foxes, some like obstinate donkeys, some like young horses for the first time let loose on the heath and rioting in their freedom. Jesus said of Herod, 'Go and tell that *fox*!' Yet of the commonplace multitudes He said that they were as sheep not having a shepherd. And that *is* the appropriate metaphor for so many of us. For why are we just where we are in our inner life and outward relationships?

Looking back over our spiritual history we cannot honestly put our finger on many conscious and deliberate turnings aside from the true path. There have been such; but just because they were so manifestly what they were, God was able very quickly to have speech with us about them. Certainly we have not been amongst those who have wrecked and disabled themselves by some plunging and headstrong folly. Perhaps we should have fared better if we had. Did not Jesus say that publicans and harlots go into the Kingdom first? No, we have just somehow gone astray like—how else could it be put?—like lost sheep.

For the most part we have not been aware of what was happening. We have kept in with the flock, taking the line of least resistance and thinking we were prudent when we were merely being cowardly. We have gravitated towards comfort unconsciously and measured the richness of our life by the abundance of the things we possess, like the sheep who does not realize that the greenest grass is usually on the edge of the bog. If we have been conscious of getting off the road, we have persuaded ourselves that at least we are not far off and can easily get back again at any moment. So, little by little, partly drawn by the thought of better pastures, partly impelled by the unnoticed bias of our own weight, partly deflected by this or that boulder in the path, but never very conscious of the direction either of the proper path or of our own, we have all gone astray like lost sheep, and now we are where we are!

Now, sincere men and women who awaken to this situation are very prone to despair about it. Again and again in our journeying we lifted our eyes to the horizon and to the hills, again and again we tried to orientate our steps by the great landmarks of Christian faith and experience; nevertheless this is where we are, strayed into these flats of spiritual mediocrity and ineffectiveness. Have then all our aspirations and desires and prayers counted for nothing, and will they never count for anything?

3. The answer to this is twofold. We give it on the strength of what we know of God through Christ. Yet even the Psalmist, we may surmise, glimpsed it; for, we observe, the confession becomes a prayer of self-commitment to a higher and stronger and more stable purpose than his own.

First, we must realize that, no matter how much a man may stray, if he keep the love of, and the desire for, higher things alive in his soul he must in the end reach his proper goal in God. There are some beautiful first paragraphs in Stephen Graham's story of his journey to Jerusalem with the Russian pilgrims.

Whoever has wished to go [he says] has already started on the pilgrimage. And once you have started, every step on the road is a step towards Jerusalem. Even steps which seem to have no meaning are taking you by by-ways and lanes to the high road. For the heart guides the steps, and has intentions too deep for the mind to grasp. The true Christian is he who has the wishing heart . . . in whose heart is a little compass box where an arrow always points steadily to Jerusalem.

Perhaps we assume that the task is laid upon us of achieving everything before we die, so that when Death taps at our door he will find a complete saint ready to answer him. But this is an unwarrantable foreshortening of the scope of the Christian life. It is also a complete misunderstanding of the Christian gospel. If a man can take to God at the end a humble, repentant, but still aspiring spirit, he will have done much, very much; or rather let us say, Christ will have done much, very much, for him. If the compass of the heart is still sensitive and unbroken, God will in the end bring him to Jerusalem.

Secondly, we must realize that to become aware of our straying is itself to become aware of God's own presence, God's own seeking love, in the heart and life. 'Seek thy servant, for I have not forgotten thy commandments.' The prayer presupposes the belief in the answer. The fact that something within him makes him aware of failure, and refuses to let him acquiesce in it, shows that he is still held by One who will not let him go.

Yes, far more important than our seeking of God is His seeking of us. Do let us give up measuring things by our grasp of God; think daily of God's mighty grasp of us and be at peace. Only we must keep the compass of our hearts intact. We must still measure ourselves by the highest, direct our feet to the highest, as we are able. The rest be with God.

Let me no more my comfort draw
From my frail hold of Thee,
In this alone rejoice with awe,
Thy mighty grasp of me![1]

SEXAGESIMA.

The Crisis and Us Christians.

BY THE REVEREND W. H. MURRAY WALTON, M.A., VICAR OF BROMLEY.

'Go . . . preach . . . heal . . . raise . . . cleanse . . . give.'—Mt 10[5-8].

We live in a grim and perplexing age. We are warned that a crisis as serious as that which followed Dunkirk is upon us; and yet somehow it seems far less realistic. An interim Budget has shown the red light. We gather we may expect longer queues and possibly colder homes, that

[1] H. H. Farmer, *The Healing Cross*, 124.

we are going to have to work harder than ever, and all this just at a time when the promise of shorter hours and increased amenities was suggesting to us that we were almost out of the wood.

One inevitable result of such a state of affairs is that while the selfish shiver over their little hoards and wonder whether they are going to succeed in saving themselves and their possessions, the best people look round to see where they can lend a helping hand.

To-day, however, a new factor has appeared which profoundly affects the situation and that to a rapidly increasing degree; service is becoming the function of the State. Public authorities have already in many directions done a great deal for the childhood of this land. As a wag has put it:

I love the nice clinic which cleans me with care,
And the kind-hearted nursery which tooth-combs my hair,
And all the youth movements so care-worn for me,
But my mother, God bless her, she never sees me!

When the National Health Act finally comes into operation this tender solicitude (at a charge of course) will extend from the cradle to the grave. The fact that it will be more generous towards our departure than towards our arrival suggests that even a State is allowed to show some measure of relief at shedding its burden of responsibility!

In one way, of course, all this represents pure gain, for it amounts to the tacit admission that in the end 'I *am* my brother's keeper.' Further, magnificent as has been the work of the voluntary organizations in the past, they have always lacked the means and the personnel to be able to cover the whole community; inevitably some people have got left out. But now that the State is taking their place no one need suffer; everybody has a right to assistance in time of need.

But if there is gain, there is also loss. For a vast organization like the State quickly becomes impersonal, so that people tend to be treated more as numbers than as individuals; the personal touch is lost. We have already had a warning of what can happen in the growth of the multiple shop. 'It is one thing,' wrote Lord Elton during the War, 'to queue up in the chain store and be served by a harassed and anonymous assistant, complete with uniform, overalls, and metal number badge, who slaps down our cheese and turns wearily to "next please"; and quite another to shop at Robinson's round the corner, where old Mr. Robinson is sure to inquire if there is any more news of Dick, who is with his regiment in the Middle East, and will remember that Bobbie is home for the holidays and has a particular weakness for cherry cake, and will keep a surreptitious fifty Gold Flakes for the week when we are expecting cousins whose home has been bombed.' Further, the fact that, come what may, people will be attended to, cuts at the very root of the motive of service, which is to care for those who otherwise would be neglected.

Yet this spirit of service, which has ever been a mark of our people and the incentive to some of their noblest deeds, is one of the most valuable qualities we possess. We cannot afford to let it die; even for the sake of social security the price would be too great. Without it, indeed, the spirit of selfishness would flourish and abound, that spirit which is determined to get rather than to give, and if possible to get more than anybody else.

'So far, so good,' says somebody, 'but what has all this got to do with us Christians? We're all in the same boat.' Surely this, that the Christian faith has been and should be the greatest inspiration of service; that the Christian Church has been and can still be the most personal agent of service; and that, in consequence, upon us Christians more than upon anybody else now rests the responsibility for keeping the spirit of service alive. Christians were the first people to start hospitals, the first people to care for the poor. Did not Julian the Apostate complain that 'these godless Galileans feed not only their own people but ours?' Christians first concerned themselves with popular education; Church Schools existed long before the State even thought of popular education. Christians were the first to promote Factory Legislation; the Labour Party owes its existence to Christians. Christians first concerned themselves with the lot of prisoners, the welfare of orphans (what doughtier champion of slum clearance has there been than the present Archbishop of York?); and though to-day both here and in other lands the State is taking things over, yet in every land, with the possible exception of Russia, Christians and the Christian Church have been pioneers in all forms of service—and Russia only turned Communist because of the failure of the Church to do its duty in this respect! In saying this, we do not for one moment deny that there are also dark pages in the Church's history; but in the field of service the chapter is a glorious one.

To the Christian religion, then, and to its corporate expression, the Christian Church, we need to turn once again at a time such as this when there is a real danger that the whole idea of service may be at a discount. But under present circumstances, somebody asks, what service is there for us to offer which is not covered by the State? How indeed can we help our country to recover this almost lost sense?

Now, if 'love is the inspiration of service, and service the evidence of love,' and if, as the Apostle says, 'We love because he first loved us,' then surely the first thing we can do is to help the present generation to learn to love Him, in other words, to regain the spirit of worship? For as we adore our Lord and Master we get a deeper knowledge of 'him who came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give his life,' with the result that we too want to do the same thing. *Adorare est laborare*, adapting the old Latin adage.

But what next? If only we think for a moment, are there not countless opportunities which come our way every day, which no State can perform—doing little neighbourly acts such as caring for the children of a tired mother so as to enable her to go out with her husband—to church may be on

a Sunday evening, or to a place of recreation some week-day; or taking a bit of cheer to some lonely old man, reading to him perhaps as his sight grows dim, or even filling in his forms; sharing some of the good things out of our store with one whose cupboard is bare; or standing in a queue a little bit longer to save somebody else; or being ready in a busy life to give that bit of extra time to a person wanting our advice or just our sympathy.

But the Church itself also stands in need of our service. However well-equipped a church may be, there is always room for more helpers—in Sunday School or in the district. Prices are going up and the burden of finance grows heavier. Why not lend a hand here also, and so lighten the anxiety of one who is called to be a minister of the Word and sacraments? For all too often through lack of finance for the work of his church the minister finds himself compelled to become a 'server of tables.' A church and a minister free from anxieties of this kind are all the better equipped to pass on inspiration to others.

'The Crisis and Us Christians' then is a very practical topic. For the Christian Church least of all has room for 'drones' and 'spivs.' Let us make this emergency therefore a time of spiritual crisis, in which just because of the present adversity we definitely re-dedicate ourselves anew to our Master's service and in obedience to His call 'Go . . . preach . . . heal . . . raise . . . cleanse . . . give.'

QUINQUAGESIMA.

The Great Essential.

BY THE REVEREND ARTHUR A. COWAN, D.D., EDINBURGH.

'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.'—Lk 7^{47}.

One Sunday evening a stained, broken-hearted woman was on her way to fling herself into the river, and she might have ended like the despairing creature described by Thomas Hood in *The Bridge of Sighs*:

> One more Unfortunate,
> Weary of breath,
> Rashly importunate,
> Gone to her death!

But as she went along she heard the singing in Christ Church, Westminster, and stole into the porch, where she lingered till the preacher's voice reached her proclaiming the gospel of a second chance. There was no further thought of suicide, for she had found One who could restore sweetness and dignity to her life, and she embraced the Saviour with gratitude and adoration.

The soiled woman in the house of Simon the Pharisee gave herself to Jesus with the same thankful abandon, and she was a passionate surprise to the company at table. She was so enchanted and captivated by the Lord who had lifted her out of hell that she could not be a secret disciple. She must celebrate the joyous crisis of her life openly, and the gratitude throbbing within made her demonstrative and dramatic. So she came into the dining-room to anoint the head of Jesus as the King who had ascended the throne of her life and to pay this public homage to Him as the sovereign of her changed heart.

She could not keep the wonderful thing that had happened to her to herself; she was not content to honour Him privately but was impelled to honour Him publicly. The passion of her heart to exalt Christ in the public gaze was glorious and our Lord welcomed it as the great essential. 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much.'

This woman's gesture was striking and gallant, because it proved that she was in love with Jesus' redeeming character. It was more than an emotional outburst. It was an act of public restitution for a life which had debauched others as well as herself.

> Wilt Thou forgive the sin which I have won
> Others to sin, and made my sin their door?

She felt she must wipe out the polluting influence she had distilled through the streets of the town, and how could she do it but by proclaiming Jesus Christ as the King under whose government the relations between men and women could be cleaned and hallowed? She must make what amends she could for the bawdy past, however humiliating and costly her public testimony might be. She broke down in the middle of it, and tears blinded her eyes, but she did not run out of the room of staring, hostile faces; no, she stood her ground, and went through with her witness to Jesus as the princely love, the kingly spirit that could raise defiled human nature out of the mud. She would crown Jesus before these eyes that dared her to go on. That was why her love blazed out and attested itself as a valid, understanding attachment, a genuine appreciation of His character, a thorough response to His saving grace. She proved that she was in earnest with Him by a self-sacrificing love. Do people who profess to have had a religious experience always supply such conclusive evidence as she did, and commit themselves to a new life as bravely and generously? Are they always as resolute in clearing up misunderstandings, redressing injuries, paying back ill-gotten gains, as this woman who gave herself to the Lord of love without grudging the price? Sometimes they are, and then they give a full answer to redeeming love. That is the great essential. 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much.'

But Simon the Pharisee was too obsessed by traditional maxims and taboos to fasten on the central appeal of love. Velazquez's portrait of the Infanta has been criticized as diverting attention from the face by emphasizing the dress, 'a cascade of crinolined embroideries.' Simon killed the human interest, the moving effect, the living, speaking features of the situation, by stressing moral clothes, the outward forms of virtue. He was conventional, proper, and unfeeling. His type

conveys the impression that personal religion is merely a cold respectability, a frost-bitten decorum. Who wants anything so dull and boring as this formal way of living, without any sparkle, daring, or zest to make the heart beat faster? The outsider is repelled by it. But the Christian life is very different from that. It is a passionate adventure of worship and service in touch with Jesus Christ, and no character is healthy without warm impulses, no church can survive without the undying fire of devotion at its heart. The woman in Simon's house felt that the Master was exciting, thrilling, and answered His grace with a flame of love. To let Divine love kindle our hearts is the great essential. 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much.'

'To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.' Simon the Pharisee was disgusted at this woman who grasped Jesus with such a passion of wonder and gratitude and who was so deeply moved by His pardoning grace. Well, she had much need, thought he. Do we not sometimes reflect that it may be natural for disreputable people known to the police to be overcome by emotion when they experience the forgiveness of sins but not for reputable men and women? That was Simon's mood, and it must be renounced. No doubt he asked God to forgive him, but it was in a formal way, and he did not feel that the Divine forgiveness was a desperate necessity without which he could not live and dared not die. He was a master in Israel, a man of prestige and influence in the community, one of 'the Pillars of Society,' but in Ibsen's play, Consul Bernick came to realize that one of these Pillars had a flaw in it, and that he must confess he had wronged others by his selfish ambition. When he had been honest enough to make this public confession, he exclaimed with happy enthusiasm, 'Now, I feel as if I had quite recovered my senses after being poisoned. I feel that I *can* be young and strong again.' Would Simon own up like this, and begin to be a real Pillar of Society? Jesus rebuked him for his want of discernment and decency. Simon had entertained Jesus with scant respect and the minimum of hospitality, and had spurned the glad agitation of a penitent woman. It was mighty offensive. But the fellow was not ashamed of himself as he well might be. He loved little, because there were unrepented and unconfessed sins in his life which he would not acknowledge. He forgot three facts about his self-satisfied life, which he deemed beyond reproach.

Firstly, there are sins of the spirit as well as sins of the flesh—pride, complacence, scorn, avarice, jealousy, vindictiveness, cruelty and the like, and these sins of the spirit may be more delusive and deadly than unrestrained, physical instincts. The woman was not self-deceived as Simon was, she was a realist about her own moral plight, she suffered conscience-distress, and that was why she reacted so intensely to Jesus Christ and loved much, whereas he loved little. He had never made a sacrifice for any person or any cause, he had a hard jaw and a grasping hand, and yet he did not cry out for Divine pardon—the brazen self-seeker! Secondly, he did not recognize that some have a better chance than others, because they are more sheltered from temptation and hardship, and one cannot calculate how one might have fallen if one had been exposed to evil in one's home or one's job. Simon did not know what it was to be starving and have to earn a meal by selling one's charms as this hapless woman did. He was making a personal merit of what was the Divine mercy to him, praising himself instead of praising God for his immunity from the base lures of hunger, and for that false pretension he needed forgiveness. He was under an unpayable debt to God's love, and yet he was not humble or charitable. Thirdly, Simon had been socially indifferent, heedless of the shameful fate of people like this woman. Many obscene and brutal crimes which shock us when we read of them in the newspaper are provoked by economic insecurity, social injustice, and slum dwellings, which have driven some to grim expedients, and which have been allowed to grow up by the quiet, deliberate unconcern of respectable people. How many care what happens to the underdog in the blind scuffle to do oneself well? This neglect may be responsible for the eruption of some lurid evils which now send a shudder through those who are sitting pretty. The miscreant has been sinned against as well as sinning, and awareness that we are all implicated in corporate evil rouses us to the need of Divine forgiveness. George Meredith says of those who sneer at the failings of humanity: 'What is contempt but an excuse to be idly minded, or personally lofty, or comfortably narrow, not perfectly humane?' Simon was not perfectly humane, he did not show mercy to others because he did not detect how ugly his character was and how much he needed the Divine mercy himself. He was an unforgiven sinner, and so he had no pity. 'To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.'

'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much.' The great essential is love. There is a saying of Hegel, 'Nothing great in the world is accomplished without passion.' True, and the mind must warm up with interest before there can be any constructive thinking or any decisive planning for a more Christian civilization. No strong feelings, then no strong ideas and no strong actions; no burning hearts, then no victorious characters. Our personal religion must be a flame of devotion to the Master of the human heart who alone can train our affections and sympathies and urge us to what love demands. Jesus Christ expects us to respond to Him with passion. Francis Bacon was right in his dictum, 'The real atheism is to handle holy things without feeling.' There is something sceptical, irreverent, even profane in being cold and dull about the big prospects opened up in Jesus Christ. We should answer His transforming love with a heart on fire, as the woman did. This is the great essential. See to it now, my friend. 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much.'

Professor K. S. Latourette's 'The Expansion of Christianity.'

By the Reverend John Foster, D.D., University of Glasgow.

One might say without exaggeration that the arrival of *Advance Through Storm*, the final volume of *The Expansion of Christianity*, is an event of a lifetime.

I was brought into touch with Professor Latourette at the Madras Meeting of the International Missionary Council in 1938. I had made three points about the importance of Church History in the training of missionaries, and got the Commission to embody them in its recommendations: 'For guidance and warning from the past, for the development of a right church-consciousness in the Younger Church, and for the approach to Church union.' The opinion of the great American was asked. He was sympathetic and appreciative, but he asked to be allowed to add four points of his own: (1) 'The teaching of Church History is in need of reorganization not only in the preparation of missionaries but also in the training of the ministry for both older and younger churches.' (2) 'I much prefer the caption, *History of Christianity*. . . . Most courses have far too little of the effect of the Church upon its environment, of the effect of the environment on the Church, and of the geographic spread.' (3) 'The study must be ecumenical in its outlook and scope.' (4) 'Much more attention should be devoted to the post-Reformation period and especially to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. . . . As a matter of fact, the Gospel has never been quite so potent as in the past century and a half.' [1]

At intervals in the years since then the seven volumes have appeared—and the four points for some of us have been driven home. If these books do not enforce reorganization of the subject, what will? Latourette has here written something like a million and a quarter words, surely the biggest work on anything to do with Church History in our time. The effect *of* environment and *upon* environment forms a large part of his mode of dealing with the subject throughout. Ecumenical, 'belonging to the whole habitable world,' is the right word for a work which covers all time, from the birth of Christ down to 1945, and all space, Christianity's progress from Palestine into every land of every continent. And what a corrective for our courses which have been content to take 'Church History to 451,' then a thousand-year leap to the Reformation period, but never a hope of coming within hailing distance of our own times! The volumes are spaced thus: Volume one, the first five hundred years; volume two, the next thousand; volume three, 1500 to 1800; then volumes four, five, six—as much as all the rest before—for 'the great century,' the nineteenth.

In the first six volumes the course of Christianity's fortunes is set out as follows. Latourette summarizes it for convenience in a chapter of this seventh, 'The course thus far traversed.' Those who are overawed by these great volumes will find the same scheme in a small book of his, *The Unquenchable Light* (Student Christian Movement Press). The record is not one of unbroken progress. If you draw it in a graph the line makes four peaks with three valleys between them. For five hundred years Christianity's fortunes are rising. Then comes the greatest set-back, from 500 to about 950. A second advance carries us to 1350. Then comes a second repulse, not quite so low a fall, nor quite so long, till 1500. The third advance then begun goes on till 1750. Then there is a third check, a short one this time, till 1815. The last lap, 1815 to 1914, is the steepest up-grade of all, 'the great century.' This is the pattern of history as seen by this historian who has taken a more comprehensive view than almost any other—certainly more comprehensive than that of any other *Church* historian. There are checks, but each has been less serious than the last. Each check has been followed by a new advance, and each new advance has carried Christianity to its greatest triumph yet. The year 1914 is the highest peak of all. From this point of view the arrival of volume seven, dealing with 1914 to 1945, is an event. What judgment will he make, against the background of the whole sweep of history, on this which most of us contemplate with despondency as the fourth period of decline?

The measure by which he has judged the position of Christianity throughout these volumes is threefold: geographic spread, vigour expressed by new movements, extent of influence upon the world. Let us see what he has to say about each from 1914 to 1945.

Geographic Spread. These three decades see serious losses to Christianity in the lands of the West. Professor Latourette connects this with

[1] Tambaram Madras Series, vol. iv. *The Life of the Church*, 258–275 contains the two articles.

the fact that most of Europe came to Christianity by a mass conversion which the Church has never completely managed to follow up and make good. The result is a nominal Christianity which is often only a caricature of real Christianity. Defections in our time have, some of them, been rebellions against this caricature; and some have been rejection of Christianity when at last its real nature and full demands were realized. In neither case is such loss to be considered as wholly loss. This is surely a true insight into the Marxist rebellion on the one hand, and the Nazi rejection on the other.

Latourette calls events in Russia 'the most thoroughgoing attempt to uproot Christianity' since the persecutions in the Roman Empire in the third and fourth centuries. How far have they succeeded? He quotes a report of the League of Militant Godless in 1940 as saying that in the towns two out of every three Russians would call themselves atheists; in the country two out of three are still believers in God. Many have compared Marxism with Islam, Christianity's first great rival, and its destroyer in so many lands. In the stronghold of Marxism, it seems, Christianity is at any rate far from having been destroyed.

Concerning the Nazis, he says that theirs were the most severe blows that had been suffered since Europe's conversion. 'The structure of organized Christianity became weaker than at any time in centuries, possibly since that low ebb not far from A.D. 950.' On the other hand Christians reacted vigorously against this new paganism. In Germany and the occupied countries Christianity became the chief inspiration of resistance. Throughout the sufferings of the War it was the well-spring of works of mercy for prisoners, refugees, and persecuted. 'The Christian faith heartened thousands in courageous endurance. It stimulated dreams and action for a better world.'

The enhanced prestige of the Church which results in many of the formerly occupied countries is widely known. Perhaps Latourette's judgment upon the German situation may be more revealing. 'Numerically the churches were weaker than in 1914. As an active force in German life, aware of the anti-Christian trend of life about them and in open opposition to it, they were undoubtedly more potent than in that year. *Effective* church membership was probably stronger in 1944 than before the Nazi storm.'

Over against these sombre happenings in Europe must be put the fact that Christianity continued to register gains in certain other countries. First among these Latourette puts his own country, the United States. One of the most spectacular triumphs of Christianity anywhere and at any time is to be seen in the short history of North America. Among an immigrant population which, coming to the New World, has cut loose from traditional religious ties, Christianity starts as a small minority movement. Yet in the years of mass migrations it follows the new populations westward. They are won to undoubted Christianity, however crude some of the forms that religion takes in frontier townships. At the same time Christianity is reaching out to the Red Indian, and to the black descendant of the slave, and to both so effectively that to-day as big a proportion of these communities is Christian as of the Whites. That proportion still goes on increasing. Half the population of the United States to-day claims Church membership. And with all this, there has been vigour left to undertake foreign missionary work, until to-day North America holds responsibility for more than half of non-Roman [1] missions throughout the world. This is a subject which demands more attention than theological training, books, or journals in this country have given it. America's position in the post-war world, and especially the part that American Christianity will play in the Church's world mission, call for our increased interest in this part of Church History.

Besides the U.S.A., Christianity reports advance in Canada, Australia, New Zealand; possibly in Latin America and Scandinavia; and most strikingly of all in some of the lands of the Younger Churches. In India and China the number of Christians had doubled in the thirty years; in Equatorial Africa it has more than doubled. The chief glory of that great century, 1815 to 1914, was that Christianity had at last become, not in ideal only, but in fact, a universal religion. It remained, however, a religion with its roots very largely in the West. We may now, since 1914, claim that among non-occidental peoples it has taken root. For example, a 'native' episcopate was until the twentieth century all but unknown. Now in both Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches the responsible leadership of nationals is widespread and grows apace. 'Christianity is more evenly distributed over the face of the earth than ever before.' With regard to the first point then, geographic spread, ours is by no means a period of decline, but one of advance, advance through storm.

New Movements. The list with regard to non-Roman Christianity begins with the Oxford Groups, the Iona Community, and the Theology of Crisis. This may well seem to some to omit more than it includes. In Britain, for example, surely any list of new movements

[1] Another important factor is the increasing proportion of American contribution to *Roman* missions.

should take account of the immense increase in Youth Clubs (in the Church of Scotland, for example, multiplied one hundred and twenty times in these last ten years); new provision for Religious Education in schools; and the growing influence of Religious Broadcasting. A historian may be expected to miss things which are so recent that their record has hardly been written. There is one movement which Latourette rightly dwells on. He knows it at first hand because he is himself a leading figure in it, the Ecumenical Movement which is now about to culminate in the World Council of Churches, including every communion but the Roman Catholic. He points out that new life in the Body of Christianity has in the past often meant further division. New movements brought new groupings, new denominations. He goes on, 'Here was an amazing phenomenon, new in Christian history. . . . Since the fourth century the drift has been towards further division. Now in the nineteenth century, and especially after 1914, the trend was reversed. Christians were coming together. This movement happened when the nations of the world were pulling apart, and in the midst of the most world-shaking wars which the human race had ever experienced. It had organization but was not producing uniformity. Its chief emphasis was upon a unity of the spirit. That spirit was more and more clothing itself in an inclusive fellowship . . . for common action.' Something 'new in Christian history'—this seems to carry us a long way from our starting point, the question whether ours was the fourth period of decline.

Influence upon the World. Different from so many who say that Christianity has failed, Latourette believes that from our religion comes most of that idealism which now, more than ever, seeks to end national and racial domination, and to ensure trusteeship of backward peoples. It is the major source of democratic principles. And since 1914 Christian idealism is not limited to the West but has become a factor in the whole world's life. 'Christianity,' Latourette says, 'was more potent after 1914 than ever it had been before.' So far from being a period of decline 'here is one of the great eras of the Christian Faith.'

As he comes to the end of his immense task this careful historian ventures to take up the rôle of prophet. Christianity, he says, if one connects it with its Hebrew antecedents, has a history of some four thousand years and must be counted among the world's most ancient religions. All other religions, even Islam, the youngest, seem to have slowed down in a fashion which gives little prospect of revival. Christianity comes to its greatest geographic expansion and its widest influence on mankind in the last century and a half. We have therefore the support of history if we Christians face our contemporary problems with confidence, and believe that whatever the valleys of our pilgrimage there are higher peaks ahead. Yet it is not on that note that the book ends. As Christians meet on the Lord's Day, Professor Latourette reminds us, to celebrate the mystery of their Lord's death—which once seemed so futile an ending—they can now remember that a countless multitude of almost all tribes and peoples, though in differing fashion, keep the same Feast; and feel themselves one with a great company that no man can number, who across more than nineteen centuries have gathered because of that same sacrifice. There we are looking not only across history and across the world, but beyond history to that other world where is the Church Triumphant.

Recent Foreign Theology.

Gospel Fragments. It is uncommon, but very welcome, to have a serious contribution to New Testament scholarship from an Oriental pen. Dr. Goro Mayeda, who is apparently a Japanese, and who is a *Privatdocent* in the University of Geneva, has published his doctoral dissertation on the Gospel Fragments,[1] first published in 1935 by H. I. Bell and T. C. Skeat, under the title *Fragments of an Unknown Gospel*. Dr. Mayeda has consulted all the books and articles dealing with these fragments accessible to him, though war conditions made it impossible for him to get access to everything. He offers first a careful commentary on the texts, with the study of the vocabulary and its affinities with Biblical and extra-Biblical sources. He then discusses the various questions raised by the texts, and in particular their relation to the canonical Gospels. He reaches the conclusion that they are independent of the latter, and of a less historical character, and that the writer was an original author and not a collector of traditions. He denies them any Johannine character, and thinks they were written in the period before there was any Canon of the New Testament for private reading

[1] *Das Leben-Jesu-Fragment Papyrus Egerton 2 und seine Stellung in der urchristlichen Literaturgeschichte* [1946]. Paul Haupt, Berne.

in Christian homes. The dissertation was presented at Marburg in 1944, and it had been intended that it should appear as a Beiheft to the *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft.*

The Sign in the Old Testament. From Switzerland, too, comes another dissertation, by Dr. C. A. Keller on *The Word OTH as a Sign of Divine Revelation.*[1] The author offers a careful study of all the passages where the word אוֹת occurs in the Old Testament, examining both the character and the author of the sign, and reaches the conclusion that the concept it denotes was an essentially religious one, which later became secularized. The purpose of the sign is frequently expressed in terms of faith, knowledge, and obedience. The study of parallel terms confirms him in his conclusions. While this study is valid within the Old Testament, we should be cautious in assuming it is valid for the Hebrew language. The relatively rare non-religious use did not replace the religious use, and its rarity is not surprising in literature that is throughout fundamentally religious. It may be but an accident that the non-religious use stands only in later passages, and we cannot rule out the possibility that a similar use could have been known earlier. There is thus no evidence of a semantic process, but only of a predominantly religious use in religious literature.

The second part of the dissertation offers a valuable study of the mark of Cain, briefly summarizing the literature that has been devoted to this subject, and giving the reader a clear conspectus of the various views, followed by a study of the sign in prophetic teaching, in Deuteronomy and in the Priestly Code. A great deal of reading lies behind this dissertation, and its full documentation gives it a usefulness that is independent of its main thesis.

The Sufferings of the Innocent. Another number of the Swiss series of studies in Old and New Testament Theology has appeared, this time from the hand of J. J. Stamm, lecturer in Basel, and devoted to *The Sufferings of the Innocent in Babylon and Israel.*[2] Dr. Stamm studies three Babylonian texts and then the relevant Old Testament material, after which he essays a comparison between the two series of texts. Of the Babylonian texts one expresses complete scepticism and has no religious worth, while the other two have a religious meaning. The Hebrew texts are classified according as they deal simply with the experiences of the pious or innocent sufferers, or with sufferings which were in themselves the illustration of a message, or with vicarious suffering. The Babylonian and the Israelite writers have a common inheritance from the general Oriental religious background, but the Israelite writers offer a more profound contribution to the problem of suffering, though Ecclesiastes is closer to the Babylonian writers in its attitude. The Babylonian writers offer nothing higher than the consolations of a cultic religion, whereas the Israelite writers have a faith in a living personal God, and in the Suffering Servant we have portrayed one who freely accepted suffering in response to the Divine will. The Babylonian religion knows no revelation of God and is without the prophetic word which Israel knew. Hence, while the one could do no more than grope amongst cultic and magical acts the other had a creative message.

The Passion Story. Professor B. Alfrink, who holds the Old Testament Chair at the Catholic University of Nijmegen,[3] has published in Dutch a study of the Passion Story of the Four Gospels.[4] In this he offers a connected account of the events from the meeting of the Sanhedrin before the Last Supper to the burial of our Lord. The attention of the reader is not directed particularly to critical questions, but to the setting forth of the story in all its significance. A few pages are devoted to the question whether the Last Supper was a Passover meal or not. Here the solution adopted is that there was a disagreement between the Pharisees and the Sadducees as to the day of the Passover, and that Jesus followed the Pharisees, and hence the Last Supper was a Passover for Him, while the Fourth Gospel reflects the view of the Sadducees, for whom the Passover fell on the following day. This is not very satisfactory, since we should hardly expect the Evangelist to adopt the Sadducean point of view against that of his Master. The value of Professor Alfrink's book, however, is rather spiritual than critical, and it offers a good exposition of the story which has always been fundamental to Christian thought and teaching, and to which so large a space is given in the Gospels. At the end of the book there is a synoptic table, giving the text of the Gospel passages in Latin and Dutch.

Zwingli. From the Zwingli-Verlag, in Zürich, comes the second volume of Professor Oskar Farner's *Life of Zwingli.*[5] This volume covers the important fourteen years of the Reformer's life, from A.D. 1506–20. This was the period during which Zwingli was priest at Glarus, and at Einsiedeln, and then at the Minster in Zürich. It was also the decisive period of his career, during which he developed into a Reformer. Already a fearless enemy of the evils of his time—a firebrand even in his Glarus days—and an earnest student —as witness the long list of volumes bearing evidence of having been read by him, often with marginal notes from his hand—he became a disciple of Erasmus and therefore a student of Greek and a Biblical theologian before he came to

[1] *Das Wort OTH als 'Offenbarungszeichen Gottes'* [1946]. Hoenen, Basel.

[2] *Das Leiden der Unschuldigen in Babylon und Israel* [1946]. Zwingli-Verlag, Zürich.

[3] Professor Alfrink's inaugural lecture, on the 'typological' exegesis of the Old Testament—*Over 'typologische' exegese van het Oude Testament*—was published in 1945. Dekker and van de Vegt, Nijmegen.

[4] *Het Passieverhaal der vier Evangelisten* [1946]. Dekker and van de Vegt, Nijmegen.

[5] *Huldrych Zwingli*, Band 2, *Seine Entwicklung zum Reformator* [1946]. Fr. 14.

Zürich. All of these phases of his career, and his relations with Luther, together with the heroic part he played during the plague of Zürich, are treated in the present volume in an authoritative way by one who is a master of the primary sources of knowledge of Zwingli. Special attention is given throughout to the intellectual and spiritual pilgrimage of the Reformer, leading up to the point of his breach with the Papacy.

Lefort Festschrift. To celebrate a quarter of a century's editorship of the Louvain *Muséon* by the Coptic scholar Monsieur Lefort, a special number has been published as a *Festschrift.*[1] This is a large volume of nearly 700 pages, containing fifty-six essays on a wide range of subjects within the field of Oriental studies. To indicate the authors and titles of the essays is impossible here. Suffice it to say that there are papers of interest to Old and New Testament scholars, to Egyptologists, Assyriologists, and students of the history of religions, by well-known scholars. Most of the articles are by specialists for specialists, and from the varied fare offered everyone whose interests lie within the wide field covered by these studies will find something to his taste. Apart from two papers in Flemish and one each in English and German, all the papers are written in French.

Danish Commentaries on the Old Testament. From Copenhagen comes a batch of commentaries in Danish. The latest is by Professor E. Hammershaimb, of the most recently established university in Denmark, at Aarhus, and is a commentary on *Amos.*[2] It contains little in the way of Introduction, but is almost entirely occupied with textual and exegetical comments on the Hebrew text. Professor Hammershaimb makes sparing use of emendation, and in general offers judicious guidance to the student. He rarely indulges in adventurous solutions of disputed questions, but acquaints his readers with the different views and indicates his own leaning. The book is intended as a student's handbook, and excellently fulfils its purpose.

The others are all by Professor Aage Bentzen, of Copenhagen. They include a voluminous commentary on the Psalms,[3] a commentary on Ecclesiastes,[4] and a two-volume commentary on Isaiah.[5] The volume of Introduction to the Psalms appeared in 1932,[6] so that we have here but the actual commentary on the individual Psalms. Bentzen is much influenced by Mowinckel, and regards the Psalms as generally cultic poems. At the same time he does not slavishly follow anyone, but offers his own contributions. In line with recent trends of Psalm criticism he tends to date the Psalms in the pre-exilic period.

For the Book of Ecclesiastes he offers no Introduction, but confines himself entirely to comments on the verses of the Book. In his Preface he acknowledges his debt to Professor Pedersen's lectures on this book. The views of Pedersen have been published in French in a short study,[7] but without the detailed commentary which Bentzen offers.

On Isaiah he follows the view which has been current since the appearance of Duhm's commentary in 1892, that the genuine oracles of the eighth century Isaiah are confined to the first part of the book, while chapters 40–55 are the work of an exilic prophet, and the last eleven chapters are not from a single hand. The Introduction is again very scanty, but Professor Bentzen has recently published a separate work on the Introduction to the Old Testament,[8] which is likely to appear in an English translation. The commentary is well up-to-date, and material from Ras Shamra and other recent sources is found incorporated in the book. On the Servant Songs his views show a measure of independence and originality.[9]

All of these commentaries are excellent students' handbooks, and all are based on the Hebrew text. No translation is offered, and the Hebrew text is not printed. The entire space is devoted to the *Fortolkning* which the volumes profess to offer. They witness the indefatigable zeal of Professor Bentzen, and his wide learning. For all are based on a thorough control of the literature on these books, including the scattered material on special points.

H. H. Rowley.

Manchester.

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[1] *Mélanges L. Th. Lefort* [1946]. *Le Muséon*, Louvain; Fr. 300.

[2] *Amos* [1946]. Busck, Copenhagen; Kr. 12.25.

[3] *Fortolkning til de gammeltestamentlige Salmer* [1940]. Gads Forlag, Copenhagen; Kr. 24.

[4] *Prædikerens Bog* [1942]. Gads Forlag, Copenhagen; Kr. 7.50.

[5] *Jesaja*, 2 vols. [1943–44]. Gads Forlag, Copenhagen.

[6] *Indledning til de gammeltestamentlige Salmer* [1932]. Gads Forlag, Copenhagen.

[7] *Scepticisme israélite* [1931]. Alcan, Paris.

[8] *Indledning til det Gamle Testamente* [1943]. See The Expository Times, lvii. [1946], 137.

[9] Cf. The Expository Times, *loc. cit.*

Contributions and Comments.

Psalm cxxi. 1–2.

This psalm is termed a Song of Ascents, or Degrees, and was sung by worshippers on their way up to the Temple. The first verse is not a statement (for we know well enough that 'help' does not come from the hills) but—as in A.V. marg.—a question; and the mark of interrogation should be printed at the end of each of the two clauses; thus:

> Shall I lift up mine eyes unto the hills?
> Whence cometh my help?

This might well have been chanted by one half of the choral procession. Then follows the reply, chanted by the other half:

> My help is from Jehovah,
> Who hath made heaven and earth.

On the hills were the idolatrous 'high places,' where the shrines of the Baalim had been built; these were done away with by the reforms of Josiah. The indignant question in *v.*[1] is answered by the vigorous asseveration in *v.*[2]. This psalm might reasonably be ascribed to the seventh century B.C., written for liturgical use either in Josiah's reign or later in commemoration of that king's reforming policy. To suppose, as Kennett does (*O.T. Essays*), that this psalm belong to the days of the Maccabaean struggle, seems to me quite needless.

E. H. Blakeney.

Winchester.

The Presbyter John.

In the July (1946) number of The Expository Times Mr. G. M. Lee refers to the Fragment of Papias (vii. in Lightfoot) where the phrase ὁ πρεσβύτερος Ἰωάννης occurs. Mr. Lee says that the position of ὁ πρεσβύτερος, if a distinguishing title, is in an unemphatic position, and that Papias, had he meant to differentiate, would have put πρεσβύτερος after Ἰωάννης. He feels therefore that 'John the Presbyter must be identified with John the Apostle.' In Fragment v., however, there is a distinct reference to another John, ὃν καὶ πρεσβύτερον ἐκάλεσεν. Apart from this may not Mr. Lee's argument be based on somewhat 'Western' assumptions? Whether or not the 'Greek idiom' is right, the Oriental 'feel' is surely in favour of Papias using phraseology with which he was accustomed, and incidentally justifying the interpretation of Streeter. Eastern nomenclature to-day supports the natural rendering of ὁ πρεσβύτερος Ἰωάννης. Aramaic and Syriac have no definite article, it is true; but definiteness or otherwise would be easily deducible from the context. Both in the Presbyterian Church and in Islamic circles to-day the word 'Sheikh' (roughly tantamount to πρεσβύτερος) would be used, preceded by the article and followed by the individual's Christian (in Islam 'given') name. Thus in writing one would refer to 'ash Sheikh 'Aziz' or 'ash Sheikh Mitry,' even though in address the article might be dropped. Similarly in the Greek Orthodox Church we always speak of 'al Khuri (=ἱερεύς) Ayyub' or 'al Khuri Nicola.' In Protestant Churches there is the same phenomenon with 'al Qassis Elias.' The Patriarch's new name on assumption of the office would be similarly and suitably preceded with his new title. Our own Bishops in England are following the Mediterranean custom in the signing of their names, wherever possible. The Ruler of the Yemen to-day is known as 'al Imam Yahya.' Even if our own Monarch is referred to in the English Press as King George or The King, the Arabic Press would always say 'al Malik George.' Is it not more likely that Papias was following a custom, and that whoever this John really was he was known as ὁ πρεσβύτερος Ἰωάννης? It would be a different kind of distinguishing nomenclature *after* the name, if differentiation was desired. 'Simon, who is called Peter' is easily distinguishable from 'Simon the Zealot,' as 'James the brother of John' from 'James, the Lord's brother.' But a reference to the individual's position or 'job' would certainly be indicated *before* his name. 'This is *the Prophet Jesus* who is from Nazareth of Galilee' (Mt 21[11]).

Eric F. F. Bishop.

Jerusalem.

A Plea for Proportion: St. Luke x. 38–42.

. . . vv. 41 and 42 (in part) πολλά . . . . ὀλίγων δέ ἐστιν χρεία ἢ ἑνός.

Faced with competitive readings, excisions, or omissions in the MSS, the only course left open is to pick the lection and interpretation which accords with the trend of the context and without which the narrative might result in being pointless. Short of losing the pith and import of much precious teaching in the Gospels, no other course appears open to the earnest student. The *crux criticorum* of this story of Martha and Mary lies in an intentional gradation from πολλὰ through ὀλίγων to ἑνός, a numerical diminuendo with a spiritual crescendo: shifting key, if you will, from a quantitative to a qualitative basis.

Without any undue distortion or perversion of the text it is possible to take ὀλίγων . . . . . ἑνός; as a parenthetic question with χρεία rendered as in Ac 6[3] equivalent to 'business' or 'matter,' giving, 'Is it even a case of a few things, or but one?'—this μέριμνα (anxiety), this θόρυβος

(restiveness)! Allowing that you are not altogether careful and perturbed over 'many things'—let us say, only a few—and even that 'few' unessential—all your fuss and bustle may be allayed by concentrating on the '*one*' thing worth while. This question has obvious point and relevance and there is no necessity to jettison ὀλίγων . . . . ἑνός as if it were some gloss or interpolation. Yet, that is just what so often the commentaries are guilty of or else resort to some evasion: μερίδα supports the foregoing elucidation. From amongst alternatives Mary has made a good choice. Confronted with three options or compartments of choice, πολλὰ . . . . ὀλίγων . . . . ἢ ἑνός she selects *one* (μερίς, part, portion, division) and adheres to it and is commended. All this seems decidedly to buttress the view that ὀλίγων . . . χρεία ἢ ἑνός is interrogative, a persuasive question. A brief note now on μερίδα ἐξελέξατο ἥτις which should suffice to explain the reference below to Lucian and the crudity of one translation of this clause plainly prompted by Lucian—μερίς (cognate μέρος, part: μερίζω, divide) is equivalent to 'a share,' 'a helping' from a dish. The guest in Lucian helps himself to something from the table. *The idea of* '*choice*' dominates the conclusion of this anecdote, is reflected in the indefiniteness of ἥτις which can be appropriately translated 'which (whate'er betide) shall not,' etc., and is of course explicit in the verb ἐξελέξατο, carrying to a conclusion all that is implied in the question: 'Is (this) an affair of a few things or of one thing?' and where, be it noted, the contrast (and the choice) between ὀλίγων and ἑνός is rendered prominent by their unique position in the sentence.

An attractive presentation of this incident, omitting on slender authority (D: Syr ^{Sin}) the special clause under consideration ends on a fanciful note (suggested by a picture, in quite unusually good taste, from the Cynic of Lucian) in those words, 'Mary has chosen the best dish and she is not to be dragged away (sic) from it.' This expression is a trifle infelicitous. The passage in Lucian correctly describes a man at a feast surrounded by an embarrassing complexity of choice dishes. He wisely selects a portion of one and is satisfied therewith.

A standard commentary interposes, like a red herring, a distinction between the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa* drawn by Gregory the Great in one of his notes on Ezekiel. But it is quite beside the point and looks like so much padding, for Martha and Mary are not set out in any violent opposition to each other; though Martha the busy person may so easily degenerate into Martha the busybody and is therefore duly warned.

To any fair, balanced, and unprejudiced judgment our Blessed Lord appears to appreciate them both, 'He loved Martha *and* Mary.' A combination of their respective virtues would produce sound womanhood—an amalgam of a worshipful Mary and a kindly, solicitous, careful Martha—a being both diligent in business and fervent in spirit.

A sage once said: 'In this work-a-day world Mary should just be another name for Martha off duty.' Surely μηδὲν ἄγαν is still a precious jewel.

T. GILLIESON.

Bonkyl, Duns.

The Interpretation of Proverbs xxix. 5.

M.T. גֶּבֶר מַחֲלִיק עַל־רֵעֵהוּ רֶשֶׁת פּוֹרֵשׂ עַל־פְּעָמָיו׃

A.V. 'A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet' (R.V. 'steps').

LXX ὃς παρασκευάζεται ἐπὶ πρόσωπον τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ φίλου δίκτυον, περιβάλλει αὐτὸ τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ ποσίν.

THE LXX rendering of this verse is noteworthy in two respects. In the first place, whereas the pronominal suffix in the word פְּעָמָיו 'his feet' is generally taken by commentators on the Hebrew text to refer to רֵעֵהוּ, in the LXX translation it is taken to refer to גֶּבֶר. And secondly, in the LXX translation the word רֶשֶׁת is treated as the object of מַחֲלִיק. These two features of the LXX rendering of this verse point the way, I believe, to the correct interpretation of it. I suggest, first, that we should follow the LXX and take the pronominal suffix in פְּעָמָיו as referring to גֶּבֶר; and next, that מַחֲלִיק here should be explained, not by reference to חָלַק 'was smooth,' Hiph. 'flattered,' but to an entirely different root חָלַק, cognate with the Arabic حلق, which, Dozy notes (in *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes*, i. 316), can mean 'prendre, envelopper dans des rets, dans des filets.' The resulting translation will then be:

> 'A man who lays a snare for his neighbour
> Spreadeth a net for his own feet.'

The word מַחֲלִיק is thus seen to bear much the same meaning as the phrase רֶשֶׁת פּוֹרֵשׂ, and the point of the aphorism is that the man who lays a snare to catch some one else will find that his action will recoil upon himself.

D. WINTON THOMAS.

Cambridge.

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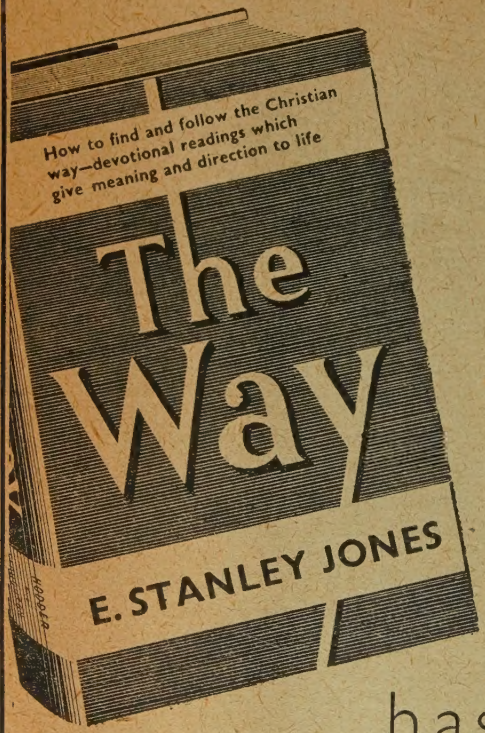
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